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the better mode of spelling which we find him using in other works. We have also made some slight alterations in punctuation in some places, but never in places where the meaning might be in any way affected by an alteration of the signs.

We have been obliged to give occasional foot notes in order to introduce some of these essays and tracts, and to explain the circumstances under which they were written. In some places we have also given notes to elucidate facts referred to by the author which are now well nigh forgotten, as well as to throw additional light upon certain passages in this volume, in the hope that they might be found interesting.

With few exceptions the tracts and essays inserted in this volume are reprinted from the works published by the Raja himself during his life-time. The 'Prospects of Christianity in India' we have taken from a pamphlet published in London in 1825, containing the whole correspondence on the subject between Rev. Dr. Ware, Ram Mohun Roy, and Rev. Mr. Adam. The petition on English Education to Lord Amherst may be found in a pamphlet on the 'Education of the people of India' by Sir Charles Trevelyan, as well as in Babu Raj Narayan Bose's Essay on the Hindu College. It was sent by Ram Mohun Roy to Bishop Heber to be put into the hands of Lord Amherst who again handed it over to the Education Committee. It was published in the Gyananweshun, and selected portions of it were inserted in 1834 in the Asiatic Journal Vol. XV., p. 136. The petitions against the Press Regulation are reprinted from a copy of the original petition with annexures which was sent to England. We have inserted them among the works of Raja Ram Mohun Roy for they are generally known to be so, and for the reason that they are written in a style which was Ram Mohun Roy's own, and what is more, the feeling of patriotism and the good sense displayed in them are such as no body in India at that time, whether he was an Englishman or a Hindu, was capable of. Moreover we find them included in the list of the Raja's works made by Chunder Sekhur Deb, as well as in the list prepared by Ramaprasad Roy.

There are some essays in which the names of other persons such as Prosunno Kumar Tagore, Chunder Sekhur Deb, and others appear

as their authors. But it is well-known that Ram Mohun Roy was fond of writing under fictitious names, and especially of giving the names of his friends to his works. There is no doubt that tracts of this nature which we have published are Ram Mohun Roy's, as we have got the authority of Chunder Sekhur Deb in some cases, and as most of them are included in the above-mentioned lists. We have also got other contemporaneous evidence regarding the authorship of some of these tracts. The tract entitled "The Answer of a Hindoo &c." which is signed by Chunder Sekhur Deb, was sent by Mr. W. Adam in a letter dated Calcutta, January 18th, 1828, to Dr. Tuckerman of Boston, as a new composition of Ram Mohun Roy. The "Humble Suggestion" is included in the list of Ramaprasad Roy, and the hand of Ram Mohun Roy is so palpable there that we have heard nobody doubting that it is a production of Ram Mohun Roy.

In the Appendix to this volume we have inserted an address to Lord William Bentinck, and a petition to the Privy Council on the abolition of the Sutte. We have every reason to believe from their style and the sentiments conveyed in them, that they were written by Ram Mohun Roy, but as we have got no direct evidence regarding their authorship, we have published them in the Appendix. We have also put in the Appendix the famous Trust Deed of the Brahmo Somaj. It was mostly drafted by attorneys, but there is no doubt that the celebrated passages containing the object of the trust in words which will ever remain memorable for the broad and catholic spirit which they breathe, were Ram Mohun Roy's own.

These works have been obtained chiefly from the Adi Brahmo Somaj, and from the collection of Ram Mohun Roy's works in the possession of Dr. Mohendra Lal Sircar, to whom our thanks are due. Some Tracts and Essays have been kindly sent to us by Miss Collet from England, and a few have been searched out from the public libraries of Calcutta.

In this place we should mention that we are indebted to Miss Collet more than to any other person for the interest she has taken and the help she has rendered to us in our undertaking. Our thanks are also due to Mr. Anund Mohun Bose for the help and encouragement he has given us.

One name remains to be mentioned. No one has laboured more or made greater sacrifice for preserving the works of Ram Mohun Roy from being lost and forgotten than Babu Eshan Chunder Bose. He it was who collected these works, and employed me, I may say, to edit them. Even in editing I have received considerable help from him. In fact the credit of this publication entirely belongs to him.

JOGENDEA CHUNDER GHOSE.

• BHOWANIPORE, }  
August 31, 1885.

*A list of the principal works of Raja Ram Mohun Roy  
in chronological order.*

Sak.	A.D.	তুহফৎ উল মুওয়াহিদ্দীন (পারসী ও আরবী)	Tuhfatul Muwahhiddin (Persian and Arabic.)
1737	1815	বেদান্ত গ্রন্থ ।	
1738	1816	বেদান্তসার । কেন উপনিষৎ । ঈশ উপনিষৎ ।	Abridgment of the Vedant. Cena Upanishad. Ishopanishad.
1739	1817	কঠ, মুণ্ডক ও ম'ণ্ডুকোপনিষৎ । দ্বিতীয় ।	A defence of Hindoo Theism. Second defence of do do.
1740	1818	সহমরণ বিষয়ক প্রথম প্রস্তাব ।	First conference on the Burning of widows.
1741	1819	সহমরণ বিষয়ক দ্বিতীয় প্রস্তাব ।	Mundak and Kut'h Upanishads.
1742	1820	কবিতাকারের সহিত বিচার ।	Second conference on the Burning of . . . Pursuit of final Beatitude. Precepts of Jesus. First Appeal in defence of do.
1743	1821	ব্রাহ্মণসেবধি ১, ২, ৩ ।	Second Appeal do do. Brahmunical Magazine I. II, & III
1744	1822	চারি প্রহরের উত্তর । সংবাদ কৌমুদী ।	Ancient rights of Females.



1745	1823	প্রার্থনাপত্র । পৃথ্য প্রদান ।	Humble suggestions. Final Appeal in defence of the Precepts of Jesus. Brahmunical Magazine, No. IV. Tytler controversy. Petitions against the Press Regu- lation. Letter on English Education.
1746	1824		Prospect of Christianity.
1747	1825		Different modes of worship.
1748	1826	ব্রহ্মনিষ্ঠ গৃহস্থের লক্ষণ । কাঙ্ক্ষার সহিত বিচার ।	Bengali Grammar in English language.
1749	1827	গায়ত্রী পরমোপাসনাবিধানং । বজ্র হুতা ।	Divine worship by means of Gyuttree.
1750	1828	-----	Answer of a Hindoo &c.
1751	1829	অমৃতান ।	Religious Instructions founded on sacred authorities. "
	1830	সহমরণবিষয়ক তৃতীয় প্রস্তাব । ( )	Trust-Deed of the Brahmo Somaj. Address to Lord William Bentinck Abstract of the arguments re- garding the Burning of widows.
1752			Ancestral Property.
1753	1831		Evidence before the Select Com- mittee of the House of Com- mons.
1754	1832		Settlement in India by Euro- peans.

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TRANSLATION  
OF AN  
ABRIDGMENT<sup>2</sup>  
OF  
THE VEDANT,  
OR  
THE RESOLUTION OF ALL THE VEDS ;  
THE  
MOST CELEBRATED AND REVERED WORK OF  
**Brahminical Theology ;**  
ESTABLISHING THE UNITY OF THE SUPREME BEING ; AND THAT  
HE ALONE  
IS THE OBJECT OF PROPITIATION AND WORSHIP.

CALCUTTA :

1816.



TO  
THE BELIEVERS OF THE ONLY TRUE GOD.

THE greater part of Brahmins, as well as of other sects of Hindoos, are quite incapable of justifying that idolatry which they continue to practise. When questioned on the subject, in place of adducing reasonable arguments in support of their conduct, they conceive it fully sufficient to quote their ancestors as positive authorities ! And some of them are become very ill-disposed towards me, because I have forsaken idolatry for the worship of the true and eternal God ! In order, therefore, to vindicate my own faith and that of our early forefathers, I have been endeavouring, for some time past, to convince my countrymen of the true meaning of our sacred books ; and to prove, that my aberration deserves not the opprobrium which some unreflecting persons have been so ready to throw upon me.

The whole body of the Hindoo Theology, Law, and Literature, is contained in the Veds, which are affirmed to be coeval with the creation ! These works are extremely voluminous, and being written in the most elevated and metaphorical style are, as may be well supposed, in many passages seemingly confused and contradictory. Upwards of two thousand years ago, the great Byas, reflecting on the perpetual difficulty arising from these sources, composed with great discrimination a complete and compendious abstract of the whole, and also reconciled those texts which appeared to stand at variance. This work he termed *The Vedant*, which, compounded of two Sungscrit words, signifies *The Resolution of all the Veds*. It has continued to be most highly revered by all Hindoos, and in place

of the more diffuse arguments of the Vêds, is always referred to as equal authority. But from its being concealed within the dark curtain of the Sungscrit language, and the Brahmins permitting themselves alone to interpret, or even to touch any book of the kind, the Vedânt, although perpetually quoted, is little known to the public : and the practice of few Hindoos indeed bears the least accordance with its precepts !

In pursuance of my vindication, I have to the best of my abilities translated this hitherto unknown work, as well as an abridgment thereof, into the Hîndoostanee and Bengalee languages, and distributed them, free of cost, among my own countrymen, as widely as circumstances have possibly allowed. The present is an endeavour to render an abridgment of the same into English, by which I expect to prove to my European friends, that the superstitious practices which deform the Hindoo religion have nothing to do with the pure spirit of its dictates !

I have observed, that both in their writings and conversation, many Europeans feel a wish to palliate and soften the features of Hindoo idolatry ; and are inclined to inculcate, that all objects of worship are considered by their votaries as emblematical representations of the Supreme Divinity ! If this were indeed the case, I might perhaps be led into some examination of the subject : but the truth is, the Hindoos of the present day have no such views of the subject, but firmly believe in the real existence of innumerable gods and goddesses, who possess, in their own departments, full and independent power ; and to propitiate them, and not the true God, are temples erected and ceremonies performed. There can be no doubt, however, and it is my whole design to prove, that every rite has its derivation from the allegorical adoration of the true Deity ; but at the present day all this is forgotten, and among many it is even heresy to mention it !

I hope it will not be presumed that I intend to establish the preference of my faith over that of other men. The result of controversy on such a subject, however multiplied, must

be ever unsatisfactory; for the reasoning faculty which leads men to certainty in things within its reach, produces no effect on questions beyond its comprehension. I do no more than assert, that, if correct reasoning, and the dictates of common sense, induce the belief of a wise, uncreated Being, who is the supporter and ruler of the boundless universe, we should also consider him the most powerful and supreme existence,—far surpassing our powers of comprehension or description! And, although men of *uncultivated* minds, and even some *learned* individuals, (but in this one point blinded by *prejudice*,) readily choose, as the object of their adoration, any thing which they can always see, and which they pretend to *feel*; the absurdity of such conduct is not thereby in the least degree diminished.

My constant reflections on the inconvenient, or rather injurious rites, introduced by the peculiar practice of Hindoo idolatry, which, more than any other pagan worship, destroys the texture of society, together with compassion for my countrymen, have compelled me to use every possible effort to awaken them from their dream of error: and by making them acquainted with their scriptures, enable them to contemplate with true devotion the unity and omnipresence of Nature's God.

By taking the path which conscience and sincerity direct, I, born a Brahmun, have exposed myself to the complainings and reproaches, even of some of my relations, whose prejudices are strong, and whose temporal advantage depends upon the present system. But these, however accumulated, I can tranquilly bear, trusting that a day will arrive when my humble endeavours will be viewed with justice—perhaps acknowledged with gratitude. At any rate, whatever men may say, I cannot be deprived of this consolation: my motives are acceptable to that Being who beholds in secret and compensates openly!





# ABRIDGMENT

OF

## THE VEDANT.

• THE illustrious Byas,\* in his celebrated work, the Vedant, insinuates in the first text, that it 'is absolutely necessary for mankind to acquire knowledge respecting the Supreme Being, who is the subject of discourse in all the Veds, and the Vedant, as well as in the other Systems of Theology. But he found, from the following passages of the Veds, that this inquiry is limited to very narrow bounds, viz. "The Supreme Being is "not comprehensible by vision, or by any other of the organs "of sense; nor can he be conceived by means of devotion, or "virtuous practices!"† "He sees every thing, though never "seen; hears every thing, though never directly heard of! He "is neither short, nor is he long;‡ inaccessible to the reasoning "faculty; not to be compassed by description; beyond the "limits of the explanation of the Ved, or of human conception!"§ Byas, also, from the result of various arguments coinciding with the Ved, found that the accurate and positive knowledge of the Supreme Being is not within the boundary of comprehension; i. e. that *what*, and *how*, the Supreme Being is, cannot be definitely ascertained. He has therefore, in the second text, explained the Supreme Being by his effects and works, without attempting to define his essence; in like manner as we, not knowing the real nature of the sun, explain him to be the cause

\* The greatest of the Indian theologists, philosophers, and poets, was begotten by the celebrated Purasur and Sutyubutee. Byas collected and divided the Veds into certain books and chapters, he is therefore commonly called Vedu Byas. The word Byas is composed of the preposition *bi* and the verb *uss* to divide.

† Munduc.

‡ Brih'darunnuc.

§ Cuthubulli.

of the succession of days and epochs. "He by whom the birth, existence, and annihilation of the world is regulated, is the Supreme Being!" We see the multifarious, wonderful universe, as well as the birth, existence, and annihilation, of its different parts; hence, we naturally infer the existence of a being who regulates the whole, and call him the Supreme: in the same manner as from the sight of a pot, we conclude the existence of its artificer. The Ved, in like manner, declares the Supreme Being thus: "He from whom the universal world proceeds, who is the Lord of the Universe, and whose work is the universe, is the Supreme Being!"\*

The *Ved* is not supposed to be an eternal Being, though sometimes dignified with such an epithet; because its being created by the Supreme Being is declared in the same Ved thus: "All the texts and parts of the Ved were created:" and also in the third text of the Vedant, God is declared to be the cause of all the Veds.

• The *void Space* is not conceived to be the independent cause of the world, notwithstanding the following declaration of the Ved, "The world proceeds from the void space;"† for the Ved again declares, "By the Supreme Being the void space was produced." And the Vedant‡ says: "As the Supreme Being is evidently declared in the Ved to be the cause of the void Space, Air, and Fire, neither of them can be supposed to be the independent cause of the universe."

Neither is *Air* allowed to be the Lord of the Universe, although the Ved says in one instance, "In Air every existing creature is absorbed;" for the Ved again affirms, that "Breath, the intellectual power, all the internal and external senses, the void Space, Air, Light, Water, and the extensive Earth, proceeded from the Supreme Being!" The Vedant§ also says: "God is meant by the following text of the Ved, as a Being

\* Taittureeu.

† Chhandoggu.

‡ Fourteenth text, 4th sec. 1st chap.

§ 8th, 3d, 1st.

“more extensive than all the extension of Space;” viz. “*That* “breath is greater than the extension of Space in all directions,” as it occurs in the Ved, after the discourse concerning common breath is concluded.

*Light*, of whatever description, is not inferred to be the Lord of the Universe, from the following assertion of the Ved : “The “pure Light of all Lights is the Lord of all creatures;” for the Ved again declares,\* that “The sun and all others imitate God, “and borrow their light from him;” and the same declaration is found in the Vedant.†

Neither can *Nature* be construed by the following texts of the Ved, to be the independent cause of the world : viz. “Man “having known *that* Nature which is an eternal being, without a “beginning or an end, is delivered from the grasp of death!” and, “Nature operates herself!” because the Ved affirms that “No being is superior or equal to God!”‡ and the Ved commands, “Know God alone!”§ and the Vedant|| thus declares : “Nature is not the Creator of the world, not being represented so by the Ved,” for it expressly says, “God has by his sight “created the Universe.” Nature is an insensible Being, she is, therefore, void of sight or intention, and consequently unable to create the regular world.¶

*Atoms* are not supposed to be the cause of the world, notwithstanding the following declaration : “This (Creator) is the “most minute Being.” Because an atom is an insensible particle, and \*from the above authority it is proved, that no Being void of understanding can be the author of a system so skilfully arranged.

The *Soul* cannot be inferred from the following texts to be the Lord of the Universe, nor the independent Ruler of the intellectual powers ; viz. “The Soul being joined to the resplendent Being, enjoys by itself,” “God and the Soul enter “the small void space of the heart;” because the Ved declares

\* Moonduc.

† 22nd, 3rd, 1st.

‡ Cuthu.

§ Moonduc.

|| 5th, 1st, 1st.

¶ Cuthu.

that "He (God) resides in the Soul<sup>a</sup> as its Ruler," and that "The Soul being joined to the gracious Being, enjoys "happiness."\* The Vedant also says, "The sentient soul is not "understood to reside as ruler in the Earth, because in both texts "of the Ved it is differently declared from that Being who rules "the Earth:" viz. "He (God) resides in the faculty of the "understanding," and "He, who resides in the Soul, &c."

No *God* or *Goddess of the Earth* can be meant by the following text, as the ruler of the Earth, viz.† "He who "resides in the Earth, and is distinct from the Earth, and "whom the Earth does not know," &c.: because the Ved affirms that, "This (God alone) is the ruler of internal sense, and "is the eternal Being;" and the same is asserted in the Vedant.‡

By the text which begins with the following sentence: viz. "This is the Sun," and by several other texts testifying the dignity of the sun, he is not supposed to be the original cause of the universe, because the Ved declares, that§ "He "who resides in the Sun (as his Lord) is distinct from the Sun," and the Vedant declares the same.||

In like manner none of the celestial Gods can be inferred from the various assertions of the Ved, respecting their deities respectively, to be the independent cause of the Universe; because the Ved repeatedly affirms, that "All the Veds prove "nothing but the unity of the Supreme Being." By allowing the Divinity more than one Being, the following positive affirmations of the Ved, relative to the unity of God, become false and absurd: "God is indeed one and has no second."¶ "There is none but the Supreme Being possessed of universal "knowledge."\*\* "He who is without any figure, and beyond "the limit of description, is the Supreme Being."†† "Appellations and figures of all kinds are innovations." And from the authority of many other texts it is evident that any being

<sup>a</sup> 20th, 2d, 1st.

§ Brih'darunnuc.

\*\* Brih'darunnuc.

† Brih'darunnuc.

|| 21st, 1st, 1st.

‡ 18th, 2d, 1st.

¶ Cuthu.

†† Chhandoggu.

that bears figure, and is subject to description, cannot be the eternal independent cause of the universe.

The Veds not only call the celestial representations Deities, but also in many instances give the divine epithet to the mind, diet, void space, quadruped animal, slaves, and flymen : as, "The Supreme Being is a quadruped animal in one place, and "in another he is full of glory. The mind is the Supreme "Being, it is to be worshipped," "God is the letter ku as well as "khu," and "God is in the shape of slaves and that of flymen." The Ved has allegorically represented God in the figure of the Universe, viz. "Fire is his head, the sun and the moon are his "two eyes,"\* &c. And also the Ved calls God the void space of the heart, and declares him to be smaller than the grain of paddy and barley : but from the foregoing quotations neither any of the celestial Gods, nor any existing creature, should be considered the Lord of the Universe, because † the third chapter of the Vedant explains the reason for these secondary assertions thus : "By these appellations of the Ved which denote the diffusive "spirit of the Supreme Being equally over all creatures by "means of extension, his omnipresence is established : "so the Ved says, "All that exists is indeed God,"‡ i. e. nothing bears true existence excepting God, "and whatever we smell or taste is "the Supreme Being," i. e. the existence of whatever thing that appears to us relies on the existence of God. It is indisputably evident that none of these metaphorical representations, which arise from the elevated style in which all the Veds are written, were designed to be viewed in any other light than mere allegory. Should individuals be acknowledged to be separate deities, there would be a necessity for acknowledging many independent creators of the world, which is directly contrary to common sense, and to the repeated authority of the Ved. The Vedant§ also declares, "That Being which is distinct from matter, and "from those which are contained in matter, is not various, be-

Monduc.

† 38th text, 2d sec.

‡ Chhandoggu.

§ 11th, 2d, 3d.

"cause he is declared by all the Veds to be one beyond description;" and it is again stated that "The Ved has declared the Supreme Being to be mere understanding;"\* also in the third chapter is found that, "The Ved having at first explained the Supreme Being by different epithets, begins with the word *"Uthu,* or now," and declares that "All descriptions which I have used to describe the Supreme Being are incorrect," because he by no means can be described; and so is it stated in the sacred commentaries of the Ved.

The fourteenth text of the second sect. of the third chapter of the Vedant declares, "It being directly represented by the Ved, that the Supreme Being bears no figure nor form;" and the following texts of the Ved assert the same, *viz.* "The true Being was before all."† "The Supreme Being has no feet, but extends everywhere; has no hands, yet holds every thing; has no eyes, yet sees all that is; has no ears, yet hears every thing that passes." "His existence had no cause." "He is the smallest of the small, and the greatest of the great: and yet is, in fact, neither small nor great!"

In answer to the following questions, *viz.* How can the Supreme Being be supposed to be distinct from, and above all existing creatures, and at the same time omnipresent? How is it possible that he should be described by properties inconceivable by reason, as seeing without eye, and hearing without ear? To these questions the Vedant, in chapter second, replies, "In God are all sorts of power and splendour." And the following passages of the Ved also declare the same: "God is all-powerful;"‡ and "It is by his supremacy that he is in possession of all powers;" *i. e.* what may be impossible for us is not impossible for God, who is the Almighty, and the sole regulator of the Universe.

Some celestial Gods have, in different instances, declared themselves to be independent deities, and also the object of worship; but these declarations were owing to their thoughts

\* 16th, 2d, 3d.

† Chhandoggu,

‡ Shyetyashyutur.

being abstracted from themselves and their being entirely absorbed in divine reflection. \*The Vedant declares: "This exhortation of "Indru (or the god of atmosphere) respecting his divinity, to be "indeed agreeable to the authorities of the Ved;" that is, "Every "one, on having lost all self-consideration in consequence of being "united with divine reflection, may speak as assuming to be the "Supreme Being; like Bamdev (a celebrated Brahmun) who, in "consequence of such self-forgetfulness, declared himself to , "have created the Sun, and Munoo the next person to Brahma." It is therefore optional with every one of the celestial Gods, as well as with every individual, to consider himself as God, under this state of self-forgetfulness and unity with the divine reflection, as the Ved says, "you are that true Being" (when you lose all self-consideration), and "O God I am nothing but you." The sacred commentators have made the same observation, viz. "I "am nothing but true Being, and am pure Understanding, full of "eternal happiness, and am by nature free from wordly effects." But in consequence of this reflection, none of them can be acknowledged to be the cause of the universe or the object of adoration.

God is the efficient cause of the universe, as a potter is of earthen pots ; and he is also the material cause of it, the same as the earth is the material cause of the different earthen pots, or as a rope, at an inadvertent view taken for a snake, is the material cause of the conceived existence of the Snake, which appears to be true by the support of the real existence of the rope. So says the Vedant,† "God is the efficient cause of the "Universe, as well as the material cause thereof (as a spider of "its web)," as the Ved has positively declared, "That from a knowledge of God alone, a knowledge of every existing thing proceeds." Also the Ved compares the knowledge respecting the Supreme Being to a knowledge of the earth, and the knowledge respecting the different species existing in the universe, to the knowledge of earthen pots, which declaration and comparision

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\* 30th, 1st, 1st.

† 23d, 8th, 1st.



prove the unity between the Supreme Being and the universe ; and by the following declarations of the Ved, *viz.* “The Supreme Being has by his sole intention created the Universe,” it is evident that God is the wilful agent of all that can have existence.

As the Ved says that the Supreme Being intended (at the time of creation) to extend himself, it is evident that the Supreme Being is the origin of all matter, and its various appearances ; as the reflection of the sun’s meridian rays on sandy plains is the cause of the resemblance of an extended sea. The Ved says, “That all figures and their appellations are mere inventions, and “that the Supreme Being alone is real existence,” consequently things that bear figure and appellation cannot be supposed the cause of the universe.

The following texts of the Ved, *viz.* “Crishnu (the god of preservation) is greater than all the celestial gods, to whom the “mind should be applied.” “We all worship Muhadev (the god of destruction).” “We adore the sun.” “I worship the most “revered Buron (the god of the sea).” “Dost thou worship “me, says Air, who am the eternal and universal life.” “Intellectual power is God, which should be adored ;” “and Oodgheet “(or a certain part of the Ved) should be worshipped.” These, as well as several other texts of the same nature, are not real commands to worship the persons and things above-mentioned, but only direct those who are unfortunately incapable of adoring the invisible Supreme Being, to apply their minds to any visible thing, rather than allow them to remain idle. The Vedant also states, that “The declaration of the Ved,”\* “that those who “worship the celestial gods are the food of such gods,” is an allegorical expression, and only means that they are comforts to the celestial gods, as food is to mankind ; for he who has no faith in the Supreme Being is rendered subject to these gods. The Ved affirms the same : *viz.* “He who worships any god, “excepting the Supreme Being, and thinks that he is distinct “and inferior to that god, knows nothing, and is considered as a

“domestic beast of these gods.” And the Vedant also asserts ; viz. “The worship authorized by all the Veds is of one nature, “as the directions for the worship of the only Supreme Being is “invariably found in every part of the Ved ; and the epithets the “Supreme and the Omnipresent Being, &c. commonly imply “God alone.”\*

The following passages of the Ved affirm that God is the sole object of worship, viz.† “Adore God alone.” “Know God alone ; “give up all other discourse.” And the Vedant says, that “It is “found in the Veds,‡ ‘That none but the Supreme Being is to be ‘worshipped, nothing excepting him should be adored by a wise ‘man.’”

Moreover, the Vedant declares that “Byas is of opinion that “the adoration of the Supreme Being is required of mankind as “well of the celestial gods ; because the possibility of self-resignation to God is equally observed in both mankind and the celestial deities.”§ The Ved also states,|| that “Of the celestial gods, “of the pious Brahmuns, and of men in general, that person who “understands and believes the Almighty Being, will be absorbed “in him.” It is therefore concluded that the celestial gods and mankind have an equal duty in divine worship ; and besides it is proved from the following authority of the Ved, that any man who adores the Supreme Being is adored by all the celestial gods, viz. “All the celestial gods worship him who applies his “mind to the Supreme Being.”¶

The Ved now illustrates the mode in which we should worship the Supreme Being, viz. “To God we should approach, of him “we should hear, of him we should think, and to him we should “attempt to approximate.”\*\* The Vedant also elucidates the subject thus : “The three latter directions in the above quoted “text, are conducive to the first, viz. ‘Approaching to God.’” These three are in reality included in the first (as the direction

\* 1st, 3d, 3d.      † Brih'darunnuc.      ‡ 67th, 3d, 3d.

§ 26th, 3d, 1st.      || Brih'darunnuc.

¶ Chhandoggu.      \*\* 47th, 4th, 3d.

for collecting fire in the worship of fire); for we cannot approach to God without hearing and thinking of him, nor without attempting to make our approximation ; and the last, *viz.* attempting to approximate to God, is required, until we have approached him. By hearing of God is meant hearing his declarations, which establish his unity ; and by thinking of him is meant thinking of the contents of his law ; and by attempting to approximate to him is meant attempting to apply our minds to that true Being on which the diffusive existence of the universe relies, in order that by means of the constant practice of his attempt we may approach to him. The Vedant states,\* that “Constant practice of “devotion is necessary, it being represented so by the Ved ;” and also adds that “We should adore God till we approach to him, “and even then not forsake his adoration, such authority being “found in the Ved.”

The Vedant shews that moral principle is a part of the adoration of God, *viz.* “A command over our passions and over the “external senses of the body and good acts, are declared by the “Ved to be indispensable in the mind’s approximation to God, “they should therefore be strictly taken care of, and attended to, “both previously and subsequently to such approximation to “the Supreme Being ;”† *i. e.* we should not indulge our evil propensities, but should endeavour to have entire control over them. Reliance on, and self-resignation to, the only true Being, with an aversion to worldly considerations, are included in the good acts above alluded to. The adoration of the Supreme Being produces eternal beatitude, as well as all desired advantages ; as the Vedant declares : “It is the firm opinion of “Byas that from devotion to God all the desired consequences “proceed ;”‡ and it is thus often represented by the Ved, “He “who is desirous of prosperity should worship the Supreme “Being.”§ “He who knows God thoroughly adheres unto “God.” “The souls of the deceased forefathers of him who adores

\* 1st, 1st, 4th.

† 1st, 4th, 3d.

‡ 27th, 4th, 3d.

§ Monduc.

“the true Being alone, enjoy freedom by his mere wish.”\* “All the celestial gods worship him who applies his mind to the Supreme Being;” and “He, who sincerely adores the Supreme Being, is exempted from further transmigration.”

A pious householder is entitled to the adoration of God equally with an Uti:† The Vedant says, that “A householder may be allowed the performance of all the ceremonies attached to the (Brahminical) religion, and also the fulfilling of the devotion of God: the fore-mentioned mode of worshipping the Supreme Being, therefore, is required of a householder possessed of moral principles,”‡ And the Ved declares, “That the celestial gods, and householders of strong faith, and professional Utis, are alike.”

It is optional to those who have faith in God alone, to observe and attend to the rules and rites prescribed by the Ved, applicable to the different classes of Hindoos, and to their different religious orders respectively. But in case of the true believers neglecting those rites, they are not liable to any blame whatever; as the Vedant says, “Before acquiring the true knowledge of God, it is proper for man to attend to the laws and rules laid down by the Ved for different classes, according to their different professions; because the Ved declares the performance of these rules to be the cause of the mind’s purification, and its faith in God, and compares it with a saddle-horse, which helps a man to arrive at the wished-for goal.”§ And the Vedant also says, that “Man may acquire the true knowledge of God even without observing the rules and rites prescribed by the Ved for each class of Hindoos, as it is found in the Ved that many persons who had neglected the performance of the Brahminical rites and ceremonies, owing to their perpetual attention to the

\* Chhandoggu.

† The highest among the four sects of Brahmuns, who, according to the religious order, are bound to forsake all worldly considerations, and to spend their time in the sole adoration of God.

‡ 28th, 4th, 3d.

§ 36th, 4th, 3d.

“adoration of the Supreme Being, acquired the true knowledge respecting the Deity.”\* The Vedant again more clearly states that, “It is equally found in the Ved that some people, though they had their entire faith in God alone, yet performed both the worship of God and the ceremonies prescribed by the Ved ; and that some others neglected them, and merely worshipped God.”† The following texts of the Ved fully explain the subject, viz. “Junuku (one of the noted devotees) had performed Yugnyu (or the adoration of the celestial gods through fire) with the gift of a considerable sum of money, as a fee to the holy Brahmuns, and many learned true believers never worshipped fire, nor any celestial god through fire.”

Notwithstanding it is optional with those who have their faith in the only God, to attend to the prescribed ceremonies or to neglect them entirely, the Vedant prefers the former to the latter, because the Ved says that attendance to the religious ceremonies conduces to the attainment of the Supreme Being.

Although the Ved says, “That he who has true faith in the omnipresent Supreme Being may eat all that exists,”‡ i. e. is not bound to enquire what is his food, or who prepares it, nevertheless the Vedant limits that authority thus : “The above-mentioned authority of the Ved for eating all sorts of food should only be observed at the time of distress, because it is found in the Ved, that Chacraunu (a celebrated Brahmun) ate the meat cooked by the elephant-keepers during a famine.”§ It is concluded, that he acted according to the above stated authority of the Ved, only at the time of distress.

Devotion to the Supreme Being is not limited to any holy place or sacred country, as the Vedant says, “In any place where in the mind feels itself undisturbed, men should worship God ; because no specific authority for the choice of any particular place of worship is found in the Ved,”|| which declares, “In any place which renders the mind easy, man should adore God.”

\* 36th, 4th, 3d.

† 9th, 4th, 3d.

‡ Chhandoggu. c

§ 28th, 4th, 3d.

|| 11th, 1st, 4th.

It is of no consequence to those who have true belief in God, whether they die while the sun is in the north or south of the equator, as the Vedant declares, "That any one who has faith in "the only God, dying even when the sun may be south of the "equator,\* his soul shall proceed from the body, through Soo "khumna (a vein which, as the Brahmuns suppose, passes through "the navel up to the brain), and approaches to the Supreme "Being.†" The Ved also positively asserts "That he, who in "life was devoted to the Supreme Being, shall (after death) be "absorbed in him, and again be neither liable to birth nor death, "reduction nor augmentation."

The Ved begins and concludes with the three peculiar and mysterious epithets of God, viz. first, OM ; second, TUT ; third, SUT. The first of these signifies "*That Being, which preserves, "destroys, and creates !*" The second implies "*That only being, "which is neither male or female !*" The third announces "*The true being !*" These collective terms simply affirm, that ONE, UNKNOWN, TRUE BEING, IS THE CREATOR, PRE-SERVER, AND DESTROYER OF THE UNIVERSE!!!

\* It is believed by the Brahmuns, that any one who dies while the sun is south of the equator, cannot enjoy eternal beatitude.

†. 20th, 2d, 4th.



TRANSLATION

MOONDUK OPUNISHUD

OF THE

**UTHURVU-VED,**

ACCORDING TO THE GLOSS OF THE CELEBRATED  
SHUNKURA-CHARYU.

CALCUTTA :

1819.





## INTRODUCTION.

DURING the intervals between my controversial engagements with idolators as well as with advocates for idolatry, I translated several of the ten Oopunishuds, of which the Vedantu or principal part of the Veds consists, and of which the Shareeruk-Meemangsa, commonly called the Vedant-Durshun, composed by the celebrated Vyas, is explanatory ; I have now taken the opportunity of further leisure to publish a translation of the Moonduk-Oopunishud. An attentive perusal of this, as well as of the remaining books of the Vedantu, will, I trust, convince every unprejudiced mind, that they, with great consistency, inculcate the unity of God ; instructing men, at the same time, in the pure mode of adoring him in spirit. It will also appear evident that the Veds, although they tolerate idolatry as the last provision for those who are totally incapable of raising their minds to the contemplation of the invisible God of nature, yet repeatedly urge the relinquishment of the rites of idol worship, and the adoption of a purer system of religion, on the express grounds, that the observance of idolatrous rites can never be productive of eternal beatitude. These are left to be practised by such persons only as, notwithstanding the constant teaching of spiritual guides, cannot be brought to see perspicuously the majesty of God through the works of nature.

The public will, I hope, be assured that nothing but the natural inclination of the ignorant towards the worship of objects resembling their own nature, and to the external forms of rites palpable to their grosser senses, joined to the self-interested motives of their pretended guides, has rendered the generality of the Hindoo community (in defiance of their sacred books) devoted to idol

worship,—the source of prejudice and superstition, and of the total destruction of moral principle, as countenancing criminal intercourse,\* suicide,† female murder,‡ and human sacrifice. Should my labours prove in any degree the means of diminishing the extent of those evils, I shall ever deem myself most amply rewarded.

\* Vide Defence of Hindoo Theism.

† Vide Introduction to the Cena-Upanishad.

‡ Vide Treatise on Widow-burning.

THE  
MOONDUK-OPUNISHUD  
OF THE  
UTHURVU-VED.



BRUHMA, the greatest of celestial deities, and executive creator and preserver of the world, came into form ; he instructed Uthurv, his eldest son, in the knowledge respecting the Supreme Being, on which all sciences rest. Uthurv communicated formerly to Ungir what Bruhma taught him : Ungir imparted the same knowledge to one of the descendants of Bhurudwaju, *called* Sutyuvahu, who conveyed the doctrine so handed down to Ungirus. Shounuku, a wealthy householder, having in the prescribed manner approached Ungirus, asked, Is there any being by whose knowledge alone the whole universe may be *immediately* known ? He (*Ungirus*) then replied : Those who have a thorough knowledge of the Veds, say that it should be understood that there are two sorts of knowledge, one superior, and the other inferior. There are the Rig-ved, Ujoor-ved, Samuved, and Uthuru-ved, and also *their subordinate parts, consisting of* Shiksha or a treatise on pronunciation, Kulpu or the science that teaches the details of rites according to the different branches of the Veds, Vyákurun or grammar, Nirooktu or explanation of the peculiar terms of the Veds, Ch'hundus or prosody, and Jyotish or astronomy : *which all* belong to the inferior kind of knowledge. Now the superior kind *is conveyed by the Oopunishuds* and is that through which absorption into the eternal Supreme Being may be obtained. That Supreme Being *who is the subject of the superior learning*, is beyond the apprehension of the senses, and out of the reach of the corporeal organs of action, and is without origin, colour, or magnitude ; and ~~has~~ neither eye nor ear, nor has he hand or foot. He is everlast-

ing, all-pervading, omnipresent, absolutely incorporeal, unchangeable, and it is he whom wise men consider as the origin of the universe. In the same way as the cobweb is created and absorbed by the spider *independently of exterior origin*, as vegetables proceed from the earth, and hair and nails from animate creatures, so the Universe is produced by the eternal Supreme Being.

From his omniscience the Supreme Being resolves to create the Universe. Then nature, *the apparent cause of the world*, is produced by him. From her the prior operating sensitive particle of the world, styled Bruhmá, the source of the faculties, proceeds. *From the faculties the five elements are produced; thence spring the seven divisions of the world*, whereon ceremonial rites, with their consequences, are brought forth. By him who knows all things, collectively and distinctly, whose knowledge and will are the only means of all his actions, Bruhmá, name, and form, and all that vegetates are produced.

*End of the first Section of the 1st Moondukum.*

Those rites,\* the prescription of which wise men, *such as Vushisthu, and others* found in the Veds, are truly the means of *producing good consequences*. They have been performed in various manners by three sects among Brahmuns, *namely, Udhuryoo, or those who are well versed in the Ujoor-ved; Oodgata, or the sect who know thoroughly the Samu-ved; and Hota, those Bruhmuns that have a perfect knowledge of the Rig-ved*. You all continue to perform them, as long as you feel a desire to enjoy gratifications attainable from them. This practice of performing rites is the way which leads you to the benefits you expect to derive from your works.

Fire being augmented when its flame waves, *the observer of rites* shall offer oblations to deities in the middle of the waving flame.

\* In the beginning of this Section, the author treats of the subject of the inferior knowledge; and in the conclusion he introduces that of the superior doctrine, which he continues throughout the whole Oopunishud.

If observance of the sacred fire be not attended with the rites required to be performed on the days of new and full moon, and during the four months of the rains, and in the autumn and spring ; and be also not attended with hospitality and due regard to time or the worship of Vyshwudevu, and be fulfilled without regard to prescribed forms, it will deprive the worshipper of the enjoyments which he might otherwise expect in his seven future mansions.

Kalee, Kuralee, Munojuvá, Soolohitá, Soodhoomruvurná, Spchoolinginee, Vishwuroochee, are *the seven names of the seven waving points of the flame.*

He who offers oblations at the prescribed time in those illuminating and waving points of fire, is carried by the oblations so offered through the rays of the Sun to the Heaven where Indru, prince of the celestial gods, reigns. The illuminating oblations, while carrying the observer of rites through the rays of the Sun, *invite him to heaven, saying, "Come in ! come in !"* and entertaining him with pleasing conversation, and treating him with veneration, say to him, "This is the summit of the heavens, the fruit of your good works."

The eighteen members of rites and sacrifices, *void of the true knowledge*, are infirm and perishable. Those ignorant persons who consider them as the source of real bliss, shall, after the enjoyment of future gratification, undergo transmigrations. Those fools who, immersed in ignorance, *that is, the foolish practice of rites*, consider themselves to be wise and learned, wander about, repeatedly subjecting themselves to *birth, disease, death, and other pains*, like blind men when guided by a blind man.

Engaged in various manners of rites and sacrifices, the ignorant are sure of obtaining their objects : but as the observers of such rites, from their excessive desire of fruition, remain destitute of a knowledge of God, they, afflicted with sorrows, descend to this world after the time of their celestial gratification is expired. Those complete fools believe, that the rites prescribed by the Veds in performing sacrifices, and those laid down by

the Smrities at the digging of wells and other pious liberal actions, are the most beneficial, and have no idea that a knowledge of, and faith in God, are the only true sources of bliss. They after death, having enjoyed the consequence of such rites on the summit of heaven, transmigrate in the human form, or in that of inferior animals, or of plants.

*Mendicants and hermits*, who residing in forests, live upon alms, as well as *householders* possessed of a portion of wisdom, practising religious austerities, the worship of Brahmá and others, and exercising a control over the senses, freed from sins, ascend through the northern path\* to the highest part of heaven, where the immortal Brahmá, who is coeval with the world, assumes *his supremacy*.

Having taken into serious consideration the perishable nature of all objects *within the world*, which are acquirable from human works, a Brahmun shall cease to desire them ; reflecting within himself, that nothing *which is obtained through perishable means* can be expected to be eternal : hence what use of rites ? He then, with a view to acquire a knowledge of superior learning, shall proceed, with a load of wood in his hand, to a spiritual teacher who is versed in the doctrines of the Veds, and has firm faith in God. The wise teacher shall properly instruct his pupil so devoted to him, freed from the importunities of external senses, and possessed of tranquility of mind, in the knowledge through which he may know the eternal Supreme Being.

*End of the first Moondukum.* •

He, *the subject of the superior knowledge*, alone is true. As from a blazing fire thousands of sparks of the same nature proceed, so from the eternal Supreme Being (O beloved pupil) various souls come forth, and again they return into him. He is

\* According to Hindoo theologians, there are two roads that lead to distinct heavens, one northern, the other southern. The former is the path to the habitation of Bruhmá and the superior gods, and the latter to the heaven of Indru and the other inferior deities. •

immortal, and without form or figure, omnipresent, pervading external and internal objects, unborn, without breath or individual mind, pure and superior to eminently exalted nature.

From him the first sensitive particle, or the seed of the universe, individual intellect, all the senses and their *objects*, also vacuum, air, light, water, and the earth which contains all things, proceed.

Heaven is his head, and the Sun and Moon are his eyes ; space is his ears, the celebrated Veds are his speech ; air is his breath, the world is his intellect, and the earth is his feet ; *for* he is the soul of the whole universe.

By him the sky, which is illuminated by the Sun, *is produced* ; clouds, which have their origin from the effects of the Moon, *accumulating them in the sky*, bring forth vegetables in the earth ; Man imparts the essence *drawn from these vegetables*, to Woman ; *then through the combination of such physical causes*, numerous offspring come forth from the omnipresent Supreme Being.

From him all the texts of the Veds, consisting of verses, musical compositions, and prose, proceed ; *in like manner by him* are produced Deeksha or certain preliminary ceremonies, and sacrifices, without sacrificial posts or with them ; *fees* lastly offered in sacrifices, time, and the principal person who institutes the performance of sacrifices and defrays their expenses ; as well as future mansions, where the Moon effects purification and where the Sun *shines*. By him Gods of several descriptions, all celestial beings subordinate to those Gods, mankind, animals, birds, both breath and peditum, wheat and barley, austerity, conviction, truth, duties of ascetics, and *rules* for conducting human life, were created. From him seven individual senses within the head proceed, as well as their seven respective inclinations towards their objects, their seven objects, and ideas acquired through them, and their seven organs (*two eyes, two ears, the two passages of nose and mouth*), in which those senses are situated in every living creature, and which never cease to act except at the time of sleep.



From him, oceans and all mountains proceed, and various rivers flow : all vegetables, tastes, (*consisting of sweet, salt, pungent, bitter, sour, and astringent*) united with which the visible elementary substance encloses the corpusele situate in the heart.\* The Supreme existence is himself all—rites as well as their rewards. He therefore is the Supreme and Immortal. He who knows him (O beloved pupil) as residing in the hearts of *all animate Beings*, disentangles the knot of ignorance in this world.

*End of the first Section of the 2nd Moondukum.*

God, as being resplendent and most proximate to *all creatures*, is styled the operator in the heart ; he is great and all-sustaining ; for on him rest all existences, such as those that move, those that breathe, those that twinkle, and those that do not. Such is God. You all contemplate him as the support of all objects, visible and invisible, the chief end of *human pursuit*. • He surpasses all human understanding, and is the most pre-eminent. He, who irradiates *the Sun and other bodies*, who is smaller than an atom, larger *than the world*, and in whom is the abode of all the divisions of the universe, and of all their inhabitants, is the eternal God, the origin of breath, speech, and intellect, as well as of *all the senses*. He, *the origin of all the senses*, the true and unchangeable Supreme Being, should be meditated upon ; and do thou (O beloved pupil) apply constantly thy mind to him. Seizing the bow found in the Oopunishuds, the strongest of weapons, man shall draw the arrow (*of the soul*), sharpened by the constant application of mind to God. Do thou (O pupil), *being in the same practice*, withdrawing all *the senses from worldly objects*, through the mind directed towards the Supreme Being, hit the mark which is the eternal God. The word Om, *signify-*

\* This corpusele is supposed to be constituted of all the various elements that enter into the composition of the animal frame. Within it the soul has its residence, and acting upon it, operates through its medium in the whole system. To this corpusele the soul remains attached through all changes of being, until finally absorbed into the supreme intelligence.

*ing God*, is represented as the bow, the Soul as the arrow, and the Supreme Being as its aim, which a man of steady mind should hit : he then shall be united to God as the arrow to its mark. In God, heaven, earth, and space reside, and also intellect, with breath and all the senses. Do you strive to know solely the ONE Supreme Being, and forsake all other discourse ; because this (*a true knowledge respecting God*) is the only way to eternal beatitude. The veins of the body are inserted into the heart, like the radius of a wheel into its nave. There the Supreme Being, as the origin of the notion of individuality, and of its various circumstances, resides ; Him through the help of Om, you all contemplate. Blessed be ye in crossing over the ocean of dark ignorance to absorption into God. He who knows the universe collectively and distinctively, whose majesty is fully evident in the world, operates within the space of the heart, his luminous abode.

He is perceptible only by intellect ; and removes the breath and corpuscle, *in which the soul resides*, from one substance to another ; supporting intellectual faculties, he is seated in the heart. Wise men acquire a knowledge of him, who shines eternal, and the source of all happiness, through the pure knowledge conveyed to them by the Veds and by spiritual fathers. God, who is all in all, being known to man as the origin of intellect and self-consciousness, every desire of the mind ceases, all doubts are removed, and effects of the good or evil actions committed, now or in preceding shapes, are totally annihilated. The Supreme Being, free from stain, devoid of figure or form, and entirely pure, the light of all lights, resides in the heart, his resplendently excellent seat : those *discriminating* men, who know him *as the origin of intellect and of self-consciousness*, are possessed of the real notion of God. Neither the sun nor the moon, nor yet the stars, can throw light on God : even the illuminating lightning cannot throw light upon him, much less can limited fire give him light : but they all imitate him, and all borrow their light from him. God alone is immortal : he

extends before, behind, to the right,\* to the left, beneath and above. He is the Supreme, and all in all.

*End of the second Moondukum.*

\* Two birds (*meaning God and the soul*), cohabitant and co-essential, reside unitedly in one tree, *which is the body*. One of them (*the soul*) consumes the variously tasted fruits of its actions ; but the other (*God*), without partaking of them, witnesses *all events*.

The soul so pressed down in the body, being deluded with ignorance, grieves at its own insufficiency ; but when it perceives its cohabitant, the adorable Lord *of the universe*,\* the origin of itself, and his glory, it feels relieved from grief and infatuation. When a wise man perceives the resplendent God, the Creator and Lord *of the universe*, and the omnipresent prime cause, he then, abandoning the consequences of good and evil works, becomes perfect, and obtains entire absorption. A wise man knowing God as perspicuously residing in all creatures, forsakes all idea of duality ; *being convinced that there is only one real existence, which is God*. He then directs all his senses towards God alone, the origin of self-consciousness, and on him exclusively he places his love, abstracting at the same time his mind from all worldly objects by constantly applying it to God : the person so devoted is reckoned the most perfect among the votaries of the Deity. Through strict veracity, the uniform direction of mind and senses, and through notions acquired from spiritual teachers, as well as by abstinence from sexual indulgence, Man should approach God, who, full of splendour and perfection, works in the heart ; and to whom only the votaries freed from passion and desire can approximate.

\* The difference between God, the intellectual principle, and the Soul, the individual intellect, subsists as long as the idea of self-individuality is retained ; like the distinction between finite and infinite space, which ceases as soon as the idea of particular figure is done away.

He who practises veracity prospers, and not he who speaks untruths: the way to eternal beatitude is open to him who without omission speaketh truth. This is that way through which the saints, extricated from all desires, proceed to the supreme existence, the consequence of the observance of truth. He is great and incomprehensible by the senses, and consequently his nature is beyond human conception. He, though more subtle than vacuum itself, shines in various ways—*From those who do not know him*, he is at a greater distance than the limits of space, and *to those who acquire a knowledge of him*, he is most proximate; and while residing in animate creatures he is perceived obscurely *by those who apply their thoughts to him*. He is not perceptible by vision, nor is he describable by means of speech: neither can he be the object of any of the other organs of sense; nor can he be conceived by the help of austerities or religious rites: but a person whose mind is purified by the light of true knowledge, through incessant contemplation, perceives him the most pure God. Such is the invisible Supreme Being: he should be observed in the heart, wherein breath, consisting of five species, rests. The mind being perfectly freed from impurity, God who spreads over the mind and all the senses, imparts a knowledge of himself to the heart.

A pious votary of God obtains whatever division of the world, and whatever desirable object he may wish to acquire *for himself or for another*: therefore any one, who is desirous of honour and advantage, should revere him.

*End of the 1st Section of the 3rd Moondukum.*

Those wise men who, abandoning all desires, revere the devotee who has acquired a knowledge of the supreme exaltation of God, on whom the whole universe rests, and who is perfect and illuminates every where, will never be subjected to further birth.

He who, contemplating the various effects of objects visible or invisible, feels a desire to obtain them, shall be born again with those feelings : but the man satisfied with a knowledge of and faith in God, blessed by a total destruction of ignorance, forsakes all such desires even during his life.

A knowledge of God, *the prime object*, is not acquirable from study of the Veds, nor through retentive memory, nor yet by continual hearing of spiritual instruction : but he who seeks to obtain a *knowledge* of God is gifted with it, God rendering himself conspicuous to him.

No man *deficient in* faith or discretion can obtain a knowledge of God ; nor can even he who possesses wisdom mingled with the desire of fruition, gain it : but the soul of a wise man who, through firm belief, prudence, and pure understanding, not biassed by worldly desire, seeks for knowledge, will be absorbed into God.

The saints who, wise and firm, were satisfied solely with a knowledge of God, assured of the soul's divine origin, exempt from passion, and possessed of tranquillity of mind, having found God the omnipresent every where, have after death been absorbed into him ; *even as limited extension within a jar is by its destruction united to universal space*. All the votaries who repose on God alone their firm belief, originating from a knowledge of the Vedant, and who, by forsaking religious rites, obtain purification of mind, being continually occupied in divine reflections during life, are at the time of death entirely freed from ignorance and absorbed into God. On the approach of death, the elementary parts of their body, being fifteen in number, unite with their respective origins : their corporeal faculties, *such as vision and feeling, &c.* return into their original sources, *the sun and air, &c.* The consequences of their works, together with their souls, are absorbed into the supreme and eternal spirit, *in the same manner as the reflection of the sun in water returns to him on the removal of the water*. As all rivers flowing into the ocean disappear and lose their respective apper-

lations and forms, so the person who has acquired a knowledge of and faith in God, freeing himself from the subjugation of figure and appellation, is absorbed into the supreme immaterial and omnipresent existence. •

He who acquires a knowledge of the Supreme Being *according to the foregoing doctrine*, shall inevitably be absorbed into him, *surmounting all the obstacles that he may have to encounter*. None of his progeny will be destitute of a true knowledge of God. He escapes from mental distress and from evil propensities ; he is also relieved from the ignorance which occasions the idea of duality. This is the true doctrine inculcated throughout the foregoing texts, and which a man should impart to those who are accustomed to perform good works, conversant in the Veds, and inclined toward the acquisition of the knowledge of God, and who themselves, with due regard, offer oblations to sacred fire ; and also to those who have continually practised Shirobrutu, *a certain observance of the sacred fire*. This is the true divine doctrine, in which Ungirus instructed *his pupil Shounuku*, which a person not accustomed to devotion should not study.

*Salutation to the knowers of God !*



TRANSLATION  
OF THE  
CENA UPANISHAD

ONE OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE

SAMA VEDA;

ACCORDING TO THE GLOSS OF THE CELEBRATED

SHANCARACHARYA:

ESTABLISHING THE

UNITY AND THE SOLE OMNIPOTENCE OF THE SUPREME BEING :

AND THAT

HE ALONE

IS THE OBJECT OF WORSHIP.

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CALCUTTA :

1823.





## INTRODUCTION.

SINCE my publication of the abridgment of the *Vedanta*,<sup>\*</sup> containing an exposition of all the *Veds* as given by the great VYAS, I have, for the purpose of illustrating and confirming the view that he has taken of them, translated into Bengalee the principal chapters of the *Veds*, as being of unquestionable authority amongst all Hindoos. This work will, I trust, by explaining to my countrymen the real spirit of the Hindoo Scriptures, which is but the declaration of the unity of God, tend in a great degree to correct the erroneous conceptions, which have prevailed with regard to the doctrines they inculcate. It will also, I hope, tend to discriminate those parts of the *Veds* which are to be interpreted in an allegorical sense, and consequently to correct those exceptionable practices, which not only deprive Hindoos in general of the common comforts\* of society, but also lead them frequently to self-destruction,† or to the sacrifice‡ of the lives of their friends and relations.

It is with no ordinary feeling of satisfaction that I have already seen many respectable persons of my countrymen, to the great disappointment of their interested spiritual guides, rise superior to their original prejudices, and enquire into the truths of

\* A Hindoo of caste can only eat once between sunrise and sunset—cannot eat dressed victuals in a boat or ship—nor clothed—nor in a tavern—nor any food that has been touched by a person of a different caste—nor if interrupted while eating, can he resume his meal.

† As at Prayaga, Gunga Sagar, and under the wheels of the car of Jagannath.

‡ As, for instance, persons whose recovery from sickness is supposed to be doubtful, are carried to die on the banks of the Ganges. This is practised by the Hindoos of Bengal only, the cruelty of which affects even Hindoos of Behar, Ilahabad, and all the upper provinces.

religion. As many European gentlemen, especially those who interest themselves in the improvement of their fellow-creatures, may be gratified with a view of the doctrines of the original work, it appeared to me that I might best contribute to that gratification, by translating a few chapters of the Ved into the English language, which I have accordingly done, and now submit them to their candid judgment. Such benevolent people will, perhaps, rise from a perusal of them with the conviction, that in the most ancient times the inhabitants of this part of the globe (at least the more intelligent class) were not unacquainted with metaphysical subjects ; that allegorical language or description was very frequently employed to represent the attributes of the Creator, which were sometimes designated as independent existences ; and that, however suitable this method might be to the refined understandings of men of learning, it had the most mischievous effect when literature and philosophy decayed, producing all those absurdities and idolatrous notions which have checked, or rather destroyed, every mark of reason, and darkened every beam of understanding.

The Ved from which all Hindoo literature is derived is, in the opinion of the Hindoos, an inspired work, coeval with the existence of the world. It is divided into four parts, viz. Rig, Yajur, Sam, and At'harva ; these are again divided into several branches, and these last are subdivided into chapters. It is the general characteristic of each Ved, that the primary chapters of each branch treat of astronomy, medicine, arms, and other arts and sciences. They also exhibit allegorical representations of the attributes\* of the Supreme Being, by means of earthly objects, animate or inanimate, whose shapes or properties are analogous to the nature of those attributes, and pointing out the modes of their worship, immediately, or through the medium of fire. In the subsequent chapters the unity of the Supreme

\* It is my intention to give, with the blessing of God, in my next publication, an account of the relation betwixt those attributes and the allegorical representations used to denote them.

Being as the sole ruler of the universe, is plainly inculcated, and the mode of worshipping him particularly directed. The doctrine of a plurality of gods and goddesses laid down in the preceding chapters is not only controverted, but reasons assigned for its introduction ; for instance, that the worship of the Sun and Fire, together with the whole allegorical system, were only inculcated for the sake of those whose limited understandings rendered them incapable of comprehending and adoring the invisible Supreme Being, so that such persons might not remain in a brutified state, destitute of all religious principles. Should this explanation given by the Ved itself, as well as by its celebrated commentator Vyas, not be allowed to reconcile those passages which are seemingly at variance with each other, as those that declare the unity of the invisible Supreme Being, with others which describe a plurality of independent visible Gods, the whole work must, I am afraid, not only be stripped of its authority, but be looked upon as altogether unintelligible.

I have often lamented that, in our general researches into theological truth, we are subjected to the conflict of many obstacles. When we look to the traditions of ancient nations, we often find them at variance with each other ; and when, discouraged by this circumstance, we appeal to reason as a surer guide, we soon find how incompetent it is, alone, to conduct us to the object of our pursuit. We often find that, instead of facilitating our endeavours or clearing up our perplexities, it only serves to generate an universal doubt, incompatible with principles on which our comfort and happiness mainly depend. The best method perhaps is, neither to give ourselves up exclusively to the guidance of the one or the other ; but by a proper use of the lights furnished by both, endeavour to improve our intellectual and moral faculties, relying on the goodness of the Almighty Power, which alone enables us to attain that which we earnestly and diligently seek for.



THE  
CENĀ UPA NISHĀD  
OF THE  
SAMA VEDA.

1st. WHO is he [*asks a pupil of his spiritual father*] under whose sole will the intellectual power makes its approach *to different objects*? Who is he under whose authority *breath*, the primitive power in the body, makes its operation? Who is he by whose direction language is *regularly pronounced*? And who is that immaterial being that applies vision and hearing *to their respective objects*?

2nd. He, [*answers the spiritual parent,*] who is the sense of the sense of hearing; the intellect of the intellect; the essential cause of language; the breath of breath; the sense of the sense of vision;—this is the being *concerning whom you would enquire*. Learned men having relinquished *the notion of self-independence, and self-consideration from knowing the Supreme understanding to be the sole source of sense*, enjoy everlasting beatitude after their departure from this world.

3rd. Hence no vision can approach him, no language can describe him, no intellectual power can compass or determine him. We know nothing of how the Supreme Being should be explained: he is beyond all that is within the reach of comprehension, and also beyond nature, which is above conception. Our ancient *spiritual parents* have thus explained him to us.

4th. He alone who has never been described by language, and who directs language *to its meaning*, is the Supreme Being, and not any specified thing which men worship: know THOU this.

5th. He alone whom understanding cannot comprehend, and who, as said *by learned men*, knows the real nature of understanding, is the Supreme Being, and not any specified thing which men worship : know THOU this.

6th. He alone whom no one can conceive by vision, and by whose superintendence every one perceives the objects of vision, is the Supreme Being, and not any specified thing which men worship : know THOU this.

7th. He alone whom no one can hear through the sense of hearing, and who knows the real nature of the sense of hearing, is the Supreme Being, and not any specified thing which men worship : know THOU this.

8th. He alone whom no one can perceive through the sense of smelling, and who applies the sense of smelling to its objects, is the Supreme Being, and not any specified thing which men worship : know THOU this.

9th. If you [*continues the spiritual parent*], from what I have stated, suppose and say that "I know the Supreme Being thoroughly," you in truth know very little of the Omnipresent Being ; and any conception of that Being, which you limit to your powers of sense, is not only deficient, but also his description which you extend to the bodies of the celestial gods is also imperfect ;\* you consequently should enquire into the true knowledge of the Supreme Being. To this the pupil replies : "I perceive that at this moment I begin to know God."

10th. "Not that I suppose," *continues he*, "that I know God thoroughly, nor do I suppose that I do not know him at all : "as, among us, he who knows the meaning of the above-stated assertion is possessed of the knowledge respecting God ; viz. "that I neither know him thoroughly, nor am entirely ignorant of him."

\* The sum of the notion concerning the Supreme Being given in the Vedant, is, that he is "the soul of the universe ;" and bears the same relation to all material extension that a human soul does to the individual body with which it is connected.

11th. [*The Spiritual Father again resumes:*] He who believes that he cannot comprehend God *does* know him ; and he who believes that he can comprehend God *does not* know him : as men of perfect understanding acknowledge him to be beyond comprehension ; and men of imperfect understanding suppose him to be within the reach of their simplest perception.

12th. The notion of the sensibility of bodily organs, *which are composed of insensible particles*, leads to the notion of God ; which notion alone is accurate, and tends to everlasting happiness. Man gains, by self exertion, the power of acquiring knowledge respecting God, and through the same acquisition he acquires eternal beatitude.

13th. Whatever person has, *according to the above stated doctrine*, known God, is really happy, and whoever has not known him is subjected to great misery. Learned men, having reflected on the Spirit of God extending over all moveable as well as immoveable creatures, after their departure from this world are absorbed into the Supreme Being.

*In a battle between the celestial\* gods and the demons*, God obtained victory over the latter, in favour of the former (*or properly speaking, God enabled the former to defeat the latter*); but, upon this victory being gained, the celestial gods acquired their respective dignities, and supposed that this victory and glory were entirely owing to themselves. The Omnipresent Being, having known their boast, appeared to them *with an appearance beyond description*.

They could not know what adorable appearance it was : they, consequently, said to fire, *or properly speaking the god of fire* : "Discover thou, O god of fire what adorable appearance this is." His reply was, "I shall." He proceeded fast to that adorable

\* In the Akhaika it is said that those powers of the Divinity, which produce agreeable effects and conduce to moral order and happiness, are represented under the figure of celestial Gods, and those attributes, from which pain and misery flow, are called Demons and step-brothers of the former, with whom they are in a state of perpetual hostility.



appearance, which asked him, "Who art thou?" He then answered, "I am fire and I am the origin of the Ved;" *that is, I am a well-known personage.* The Supreme Omnipotence, upon being thus replied to, asked him *again*, "What power is in so celebrated a person as thou art?" He replied, "I can burn to ashes all that exists in the world." The Supreme Being then having laid a straw before him, said to him, "Canst thou burn this straw?" The god of fire approached the straw, but could not burn it, though he exerted all his power. He then *unsuccessfully* retired and *told the others*, "I have been unable to discover what adorable appearance this is." Now they all said to wind (*or properly to the god of wind*), "Discover thou, O god of wind, what adorable appearance this is." His reply was, "I shall." He proceeded fast to that adorable appearance, which asked him, "Who art thou?" He then answered, "I am wind, and I pervade unlimited space;" *that is, I am a well-known personage.* The Supreme Being *upon being* thus replied to, asked him *again* "What power is in so celebrated a person as thou art?" He replied, "I can uphold all that exists in the world." The Supreme Being then having laid a straw before him, said to him, "Canst thou uphold this straw?" The god of wind approached the straw, but could not hold it up, though he exerted all his power. He then *unsuccessfully* retired and *told the others*, "I have been unable to discover what adorable appearance this is." Now they all said to the god of atmosphere, "Discover thou, O revered god of atmosphere, what adorable appearance this is." His reply was, "I shall." He proceeded fast to that adorable appearance, which vanished from his view. He met at the same spot a woman, *the goddess of instruction*, arrayed in golden robes in the shape of the most beautiful Uma.\* He asked, "What was that adorable appearance?" She replied, "It was the Supreme Being owing to whose victory you are all advanced to exaltation." The god of atmosphere, from her instruction, knew that it was the Supreme Being *that had appeared to them.* He

\* The wife of Siva.

at first communicated that information to the gods of fire and of wind. As the gods of fire, wind, and atmosphere had approached to the adorable appearance, and had perceived it, and also as they had known, prior to *the others*, that it was indeed God that appeared to them, they seemed to be superior to the other gods. As the god of atmosphere had approached to the adorable appearance, and perceived it, and also as he knew, prior to *every one of them*, that it was God that appeared to them, he seemed not only superior to every other god, but also, *for that reason*, exalted above the gods of fire and wind.

The foregoing is a divine figurative representation of the Supreme Being ; meaning that in one instant he shines at once *over all the universe* like the illumination of lightning ; and in another, that he disappears as quick as the twinkling of an eye. Again it is represented of the *Supreme Being*, that *pure* mind conceives that it approaches to him as nearly as possible : Through the same pure mind the pious man thinks of him, and consequently application of the mind to him is repeatedly used. That God, *who alone in reality has no resemblance, and to whom the mind cannot approach*, is adorable by all living creatures ; he is therefore called "*adorable* ;" he should, *according to the prescribed manner*, be worshipped. All creatures revere the person who knows God in the manner thus described. The pupil now says, "Tell me, O Spiritual Father, the Upanishad or the principal "part of the Ved." The *Spiritual Father* makes this answer, "I have told you the principal part of the Ved which relates to "God alone, and, indeed told you the Upanishad, of which, austere "devotion, control over the senses, performance of religious rites, "and the remaining parts of the Ved, as well as those sciences "that are derived from the Veds, are *only* the feet ; and whose "altar and support is truth." He, who understands it as thus described, having relieved himself from sin, acquires eternal and unchangeable beatitude.



TRANSLATION  
OF THE  
K U T ' H - O P U N I S H U D  
OF THE  
U J O O R - V E D ,  
ACCORDING TO THE GLOSS OF THE CELEBRATED  
SUNKURACHARYU.

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CALCUTTA.

1819.



## PREFACE.

IN pursuance of my attempt to render a translation of the complete Vedant, or the principal parts of the Veds, into the current languages of this country, I had some time ago the satisfaction of publishing a translation of the Kut'h-opunishud of the Ujoor-ved into Bengalee ; and of distributing copies of it as widely as my circumstances would allow, for the purpose of diffusing Hindoo Scriptural knowledge among the adherents of that religion. The present publication is intended to assist the European community in forming their opinion respecting Hindoo Theology, rather from the matter found in their doctrinal scriptures, than from the Poorans, moral tales, or any other modern works, or from the superstitious rites and habits daily encouraged and fostered by their self-interested leaders.

This work not only treats polytheism with contempt and disdain, but inculcates invariably the unity of God as the intellectual principle, the sole origin of individual intellect, entirely distinct from matter and its affections ; and teaches also the mode of directing the mind to him.

A great body of my countrymen, possessed of good understandings, and not much fettered with prejudices, being perfectly satisfied with the truth of the doctrines contained in this and in other works, already laid by me before them, and of the gross errors of the peurile system of idol worship which they were led to follow, have altered their religious conduct in a manner becoming the dignity of human beings ; while the advocates of idolatry and their misguided followers, over whose opinions prejudice and obstinacy prevail more than good sense and judgment, prefer custom and fashion to the authorities of their scriptures, and therefore continue, under the form of religious devotion, to practise a system which destroys to the utmost degree,

the natural texture of society, and prescribes crimes of the most heinous nature which even the most savage nations would blush to commit, unless compelled by the most urgent necessity.\* I am, however, not without a sanguine hope that, through Divine Providence and human exertions, they will sooner or later avail themselves of that true system of religion which leads its observers to a knowledge and love of God, and to a friendly inclination towards their fellow-creatures, impressing their hearts at the same time with humility and charity, accompanied by independence of mind and pure sincerity. Contrary to the code of idolatry, this system defines sins as evil thoughts proceeding from the heart, quite unconnected with observances as to diet and other matters of form. At any rate, it seems to me that I cannot better employ my time than in an endeavour to illustrate and maintain truth, and to render service to my fellow-labourers, confiding in the mercy of that Being to whom the motives of our actions and secrets of our hearts are well known.

\* Vide the latter end of the Introduction to the Moonduk Opunishud.

## KUT'H-OPUNISHUD.

DESIROUS of future fruition, Bajushrubusu performed the sacrifice *Vishwujit*, at which he distributed all his property. He had a son named Nuchiketa. Old and infirm cows being brought by the father as fees to be given to attending priests, the youth was seized with compassion, reflecting within himself, "He who gives to attending priests such cows as are no longer able to drink water or to eat grass, and are incapable of giving further milk or of producing young, is carried to that mansion where there is no felicity whatever."

He then said to his father, "To whom, O father, wilt thou consign me over in lieu of these cows?" and repeated the same question a second and a third time.

Enraged with his presumption, the father replied to him, "I shall give thee to Yumu" (the god of death). The youth then said to himself, "In the discharge of my duties as a son, I hold a foremost place among many sons or pupils of the first class, and I am not inferior to any of the sons or pupils of the second class: whether my father had a previous engagement with Yumu, which he will now perform by surrendering me to him, or made use of such an expression through anger, I know not." The youth finding his father afflicted with sorrow, said, "Remember the meritorious conduct of our ancient forefathers, and observe the virtuous acts of cotemporary good men. Life is too short to gain advantages by means of falsehood or breach of promise; as man like a plant is easily destroyed, and again like it puts forth its form. Do you therefore surrender me to Yumu according to your promise." The youth Nuchiketa, by permission of his father, went to the habitation of Yumu. After he had remained there for three days without food or refreshment, Yumu returned to his dwelling, and was thus addressed by his



*family*: "A Brahmun entering a house as a guest is like fire ;  
 "good householders, therefore, extinguish his anger by offering  
 "him water, a seat, and food. Do thou, O Yumu ! present him  
 "with water. A man deficient in wisdom suffers his hopes, his  
 "sanguine expectations of success, his improvement from asso-  
 "ciating with good men, the benefit which he might derive from  
 "his affable conversation, and the fruits produced by performance  
 "of prescribed sacrifices, and also by digging of wells and other  
 "pious liberal actions, as well as all his sons and cattle, to be des-  
 "troyed, should a Brahmun happen to remain in his house without  
 "food."

*Yumu being thus admonished by his family, approached Nuchiketa and said to him ;* "As thou, O Brahmun ! hast lived in my  
 "house, a revered guest, for the space of three days and nights  
 "without food, I offer thee reverence in atonement, so that bliss  
 "may attend me ; and do thou ask three favours of me" as a re-  
 "compense for what thou hast suffered while dwelling in my  
 "house during these three days past." *Nuchiketa then made this  
 as his first request, saying,* "Let, O Yumu ! my father Gotum's  
 "apprehension of my death be removed, his tranquillity of  
 "mind be restored, his anger against me extinguished, and let  
 "him recognise me on my return, after having been set free by  
 "thee. This is the first of three favours which I ask of thee."  
*Yumu then replied :*

"Thy father, styled Ouddaluki and Arooni, shall have the  
 "same regard for you as before ; so that, being assured of thy  
 "existence, he shall, through my power, repose the remaining  
 "nights of his life free from sorrow, after having seen thee  
 "released from the grasp of death." *Nuchiketa then made his  
 second request.* "In heaven, where there is no fear whatsoever,  
 "and where even thou, O Yumu ! canst not always exercise thy  
 "authority, and where, therefore, none dread thy power, so much  
 "as weak mortals of the earth, the soul, unafflicted either by  
 "thirst or hunger, and unmolested by sorrow, enjoys gratification.  
 "As thou, O Yumu ! dost possess knowledge respecting fire

“which is the means of attaining heaven, do thou instruct me, who am full of faith, in that knowledge ; for, those who enjoy heaven, owing to their observance of sacred fire, are endowed with the nature of celestial deities. This I ask of thee, as the second favour which thou hast offered.” *Yumu replied* : “Being possessed of a knowledge of fire, the means that lead to the enjoyment of heavenly gratifications, I impart it to thee ; which do thou attentively observe. Know thou fire, as means to obtain various mansions in heaven, as the support of the world, and as residing in the body.”

Yumu explained to Nuchiketa the nature of fire, as being prior to all creatures, and also the particulars of the bricks and their number, which are requisite in forming the sacred fire, as well as the mode of preserving it. The youth repeated to Yumu these instructions exactly as imparted to him ; at which Yumu being pleased, again spoke.

The liberal-minded Yumu, satisfied with Nuchiketa, thus says ; “I shall bestow on thee another favour, *which is*, that this sacred fire shall be styled after thy name ; and accept thou this valuable and various-coloured necklace. Receiving instructions from parents and spiritual fathers, a person who has thrice collected fire, *as prescribed in the Ved*, and also has been in habits of performing sacrifices, studying the Veds, and giving alms, is not liable to repeated birth and death : he, having known and contemplated fire as originating from Bruh-má, possessing superior understanding, full of splendour, and worthy of praise, enjoys the highest fruition. A wise worshipper of sacred fire, who, understanding the three things prescribed, has offered oblation to fire, surmounting all afflictions during life, and extricated from sorrow, will enjoy gratifications in heaven.

“This, O Nuchiketa ! is that knowledge of sacred fire, the means of obtaining heaven, which thou didst require of me as the second favour ; men shall call it after thy name. Make, O Nuchiketa ! thy third request.”

*Nuchiketa then said* : " Some are of opinion that after man's demise existence continues, and others say it ceases. Hence a doubt has arisen *respecting the nature of the soul* ; I therefore wish to be instructed by thee in this matter. This is the last of the favours thou hast offered." *Yumu replied* : " Even gods have doubted and disputed on this subject ; which being obscure, never can be thoroughly comprehended : Ask, O Nuchiketa ! another favour *instead of this*. Do not thou take advantage of my promise, but give up this request." *Nuchiketa replied* : " I am positively informed that Gods entertained doubts on this subject ; and even thou, O Yumu ! callest it difficult of comprehension. But no instructor on this point equal to thee can be found, and no other object is so desirable as this." Yumu said : " Do thou rather request of me to give thee sons and grandsons, each to attain the age of an hundred years ; numbers of cattle, elephants, gold, and horses ; also extensive empire on earth, where thou shalt live as many years as thou wishest.

" If thou knowest another object equally desirable with these, ask it ; together with wealth and long life. Thou mayest reign, O Nuchiketa ! over a great kingdom : I will enable thee to enjoy all wished-for objects.

" Ask according to thy desire all objects that are difficult of acquisition in the mortal world. Ask these beautiful women, with elegant equipages and musical instruments, as no man can acquire any thing like them *without our gift*. Enjoy thou the attendance of these women, whom I may bestow on thee ; but do not put to me, O Nuchiketa ! the question respecting existence after death."

Nuchiketa then replied. " The acquisition of the enjoyments thou hast offered, O Yumu ! is *in the first place* doubtful ; and should they be obtained, they destroy the strength of all the senses ; and even the life of Bruhmá is, indeed, comparatively short. Therefore let thy equipages, and thy dancing and music, remain with thee.

"No man can be satisfied with riches ; and as we have *fortunately* beheld thee, we may acquire wealth, should we feel desirous of it, and we also may live as long as thou exercisest the authority of the god of death ; but the only object I desire is what I have already begged of thee.

"A mortal being, whose habitation is the low mansion of earth, and who is liable to sudden reduction, approaching the gods exempted from death and debility, and understanding from them *that there is a knowledge of futurity, should not ask of them any inferior favour*—and knowing the fleeting nature of music, sexual gratification, and sensual pleasures, who can take delight in a long life on earth? Do thou instruct us in that knowledge which removes doubts respecting existence after death, and is of great importance with a view to futurity, and which is obscure and acquirable with difficulty. I, Nuchiketa, cannot ask any other favour but this."

*End of the first Section of the first Chapter (1st Bullee.)*

*Yumu now, after a sufficient trial of Nuchiketa's resolution, answers the third question, saying,* "Knowledge of God which leads to absorption, is one thing ; and rites, which have fruition for their object, another : each of these producing different consequences, holds out to man inducements to follow it. The man, who of these two chooses knowledge, is blessed ; and he who, *for the sake of reward*, practises rites, is excluded from the enjoyment of eternal beatitude. Knowledge and rites both offer themselves to man ; but he who is possessed of wisdom, taking their respective natures into serious consideration, distinguishes one from the other, and chooses faith, despising fruition ; and a fool, for the sake of advantage and enjoyment, accepts the offer of rites.

"Thou, O Nuchiketa ! knowing the perishable nature of the desirable and gratifying objects offered by me, hast rejected them, and refused the adoption of that contemptible practice, which leads to fruition and to riches, and to which men in gen-

“eral are attached. Wise men *are sensible* that a knowledge of “God, *which procures absorption*, and the performance of rites “*that produces fruition*, are entirely opposite to each other, and “yield different consequences. I conceive thee, Nuchiketa, to “be desirous of a knowledge of God, for the numerous estim- “able objects offered by me cannot tempt thee. Surrounded by “the darkness of ignorance, fools consider themselves wise and “learned, and wander about in various directions, like blind men “when guided by a blind man.”

To an indiscreet man who lives carelessly, and is immersed in the desire of wealth, the means of gaining heavenly beatitude are not manifest. He thinks that this visible world alone exists, and that there is nothing hereafter ; consequently he is repeatedly subjected to my control. The soul is that of whose real nature many persons have never heard ; and several though they have heard, have not comprehended. A man who is capable of giving instruction on this subject is rare : One who listens to it attentively, must be intelligent : and that one who, being taught by a wise teacher, understands it, is uncommon.

If a man of inferior abilities describe the nature of the soul, no one will thoroughly understand it ; for various opinions are held *by contending parties*. When the subject is explained by a person who believes the soul to emanate from God, doubt, in regard to its eternity, ceases ; but otherwise it is inexplicable and not capable of demonstration.

The knowledge respecting the soul which thou wilt gain by me, cannot be acquired by means of reason alone ; but it should be obtained from him who is versed in the sacred authorities. Oh, beloved pupil, Nuchiketa ! may we have enquirers like thee, who art full of resolution. I know that fruition, acquirable by means of rites, is perishable ; for nothing eternal can be obtained through perishable means. *Notwithstanding my conviction of the destructible nature of fruition*, I performed the worship of the sacred fire, whereby I became possessed of this sovereignty of long duration.

Thou, Oh wise Nučhiketa ! hast through firmness refused, though offered to thee, the state of Bruhmá, which satisfies every desire, and which is the support of the world—the best consequence of the performance of rites without limit or fear—praiseworthy—full of superhuman power—extensive and stable.

The soul is that which is difficult to be comprehended—most obscure—veiled by the ideas acquired through the senses, and which resides in faculties—does not depart even in great danger, and exists unchangeable. A wise man knowing the resplendent soul, through a mind abstracted from worldly objects, and constantly applied to it, neither rejoices nor does he grieve.

A mortal who, having heard the pure doctrines relative to the soul and retained them in his memory, knowing the invisible soul to be distinct from *the body*, feels rejoiced at his acquisition. I think the abode of the knowledge of God is open to thee.

*Nuclhiketa then asked*, “If thou knowest any Being who *exists* distinctly from rites, their consequences and their “observers, and also from evil, and who is different from effects “and their respective causes, and is above past, future, and “present time, do thou inform me.”

*Yunu replies* : “I will explain to thee briefly that Being “whom all the Veds treat of, *either directly or indirectly*, to “whom all austerities are directed, and who is the main object “of those who perform the duties of an ascetic, He to wit, “whom the word Om implies, is the Supreme Being.”

That Om is the title of Bruhmá and also of the Supreme Being, through means of which man may gain what he wishes ; (*that is, if he worship Bruhma by means of Om, he shall be received into his mansion ; or if through it he elevate his mind to God, he shall obtain absorption.*)

Om is the best of all means *calculated* to direct the mind towards God ; and it is instrumental either in the acquisition of the knowledge of God *or of the dignity of Bruhmá* : man therefore having recourse to this word, shall either be absorbed in God, or revered like Bruhmá.

The soul is not liable to birth nor to death : it is mere understanding : neither does it take its origin from any other or from itself : hence it is unborn, eternal without reduction and unchangeable ; therefore the soul is not injured by the hurt which the body may receive. If any one ready to kill another imagine that he can destroy his soul, and the other think that his soul shall suffer destruction, they both know nothing ; for neither does it kill nor is it killed by another.

The soul is the smallest of the small, and greatest of the great. It resides in the hearts of all living creatures. A man who knows it and its pure state, through the steadiness of the external and internal senses, acquired from the abandoning of wordly desires, overcomes sorrow and perplexity.

The soul, although without motion, seems to go to furthest space ; and though it resides in the body at rest, yet seems to move every where. Who can perceive besides myself, that splendid soul, the support of the sensations of happiness and pain ?

The soul, although it is immaterial, yet resides closely attached to perishable material objects : knowing it as great and extensive, a wise man never grieves for it. A knowledge of the soul is not acquirable from the study of the Veds, nor through retentive memory, nor yet by constant hearing of spiritual instruction : but he who seeks to obtain a knowledge of it, is gifted with it, the soul rendering itself conspicuous to him.

No man can acquire a knowledge of the soul without abstaining from evil acts ; without having control over the senses and the mind ; nor can he gain it with a mind, though firm, yet filled with the desire of fruition ; but man may obtain a knowledge of the soul through his knowledge of God.

No ignorant man can, in a perfect manner, know the state of the existence of that God whose food is *all things*, even the Brahmu and the Kshutru ; (*that is, who destroys every object bearing figure and appellation*) ; and who consumes death itself even as butter.

*The end of the second Section of the first Chapter (2nd Bullee.)*

God and the soul\* entering into the heart, the excellent divine abode, consume, while residing in the body, the necessary consequences of its actions ; *that is, the latter is rewarded or punished according to its good or evil actions, and the former witnesses all those events.* Those who have a knowledge of God, consider the former as light and the latter as shade : the observers of external rites also, as well as those who have collected fire three times for worship, believe the same.

We can *know and collect fire*, which is a bridge to the observers of rites ; and can know the eternal and fearless God, who is the conveyer of those who wish to cross the ocean of ignorance. Consider the soul as a rider, the body as a car, the intellect its driver, the mind as its rein, the external senses are called the horses, restrained by the mind, external objects are the roads : so wise men believe the soul united with the body, the senses and the mind, ~~to~~ be the partaker *of the consequences of good or evil acts.*

If that intellect, *which is represented as the driver*, be indiscreet, and the rein of the mind loose, all the senses *under the authority of the intellectual power* become unmanageable ; like wicked horses under the control of an *unfit* driver.

If the intellect be discreet and the rein of the mind firm, all the senses prove steady and manageable ; like good horses under an excellent driver.

He, who has not a prudent intellect and steady mind, and who consequently lives always impure, cannot arrive at the divine glory, but descends to the world.

He who has a prudent intellect and steady mind, and consequently lives always pure, attains that glory from whence he never will descend.

Man who has intellect as his prudent driver, and a steady mind as his rein, passing over the paths of mortality, arrives at the high glory of the omnipresent God.

\* The word soul here means the human soul. *Jeebatma*; but generally in these translations it is used for *Paramatma*, the Great Soul.—Ed.



The origin of the senses is more\*refined than the senses ; the essence of the mind is yet more refined than that origin : the source of intellect is again more exalted than that of the mind ; the prime sensitive particle is superior to the source of intellect ; nature, the apparent cause of the universe, is again superior to that particle, to which the omnipresent God is still superior : nothing is more exalted than God : he is therefore superior to all existences, and is the Supreme object of all. God exists obscurely throughout the universe, *consequently* is not perceived ; but he is known through the acute intellect constantly directed towards him by wise men of penetrating understandings. A wise man shall transfer the power of speech and that of the senses to the mind, and the mind to the intellect, and the intellect to the *purified* soul, and the soul to the unchangeable Supreme Being.

Rise up and awake *from the sleep of ignorance* ; and having approached able teachers, acquire knowlege of God, *the origin of the soul* : for the way to the knowledge of God is considered by wise men difficult as the passage over the sharp edge of a razor. The Supreme being is not organised with the faculties of hearing, feeling, vision, taste or smell. He is unchangeable and eternal ; without beginning or end ; and is beyond that particle which is the origin of the intellect : *man* knowing him thus, is relieved from the grasp of death.

A wise man reading to *Brahmuns*, or hearing *from a teacher*, this ancient doctrine imparted to Nuchiketa by Yumu, is absorbed into God.

He who reads this most secret doctrine before an assemblage of Brahmuns, or at the time of offering oblations to his forefathers, enjoys innumerable good consequences.

*The end of the third Section of the first Chapter (3rd Bullee.)*

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God has created the senses to be directed towards external objects ; they consequently are apt to perceive outward things only, and not the eternal spirit. But a wise man being desirous

of eternal life, withdrawing his senses from their natural course, apprehends the omnipresent Supreme Being.

The ignorant seek external and desirable objects only ; *consequently* they are subjected to the chain of all-seizing death. Hence the wise, knowing that God alone is immortal and eternal in this perishable world, do not cherish a wish *for those objects*.

To Him, owing to whose presence alone the animate beings, *composed of insensible particles*, perceive objects through vision, the power of taste, of feeling, and of hearing, and also the pleasure derivable from sexual intercourse, nothing can be unknown : he is that existence which *thou desiredst to know*.

A wise man after having known that the soul, owing to whose presence living creatures perceive objects, whether they dream or wake, is great and extensive, never grieves.

He who believes that the soul, which enjoys the fruits of good or evil actions, intimately connected with the body, originates from and is united with God, the Lord of past and future events, will not conceal its nature : he is that existence which thou desiredst to know. He who knows that the prime sensitive particle, which proceeded from God prior to the creation of water and the other elements, having entered into the heart, exists united with material objects, knows the Supreme Being. He is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

That sensitive particle which perceives objects, and includes all the celestial deities, and which was created with all the elements, exists, entering into the space of the heart, and there resides. It is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

The sacred fire, the receiver of oblations, after the wood has been kindled below and above, is preserved by its observers with the same care as pregnant women take of their foetus : it is praised daily by prudent observers, and men habituated to constant devotion. That atmosphere from whence the sun ascends, and in which he goes down, on which all the world, *including fire, speech, and other things*, rests, and independently of which *nothing* exists, is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

Whatever individual intellect there is connected with the body, is that intellectual principle, which is pure and immaterial existence, and the intellectual overspreading principle is the individual intellect ; but he who thinks here that they are different in nature, is subject to repeated transmigrations.

Through the mind, *purified by spiritual instructions*, the knowledge that the soul is of divine origin, and by no means is different *from its source*, shall be acquired, whereby the idea of duality entirely ceases. He who thinks there is variety of intellectual principle, undergoes transmigration.

The omnipresent spirit, extending over the space of the heart, which is the size of a finger, resides within the body ; and persons knowing him the Lord of past and future events, will not again attempt to conceal his nature : He is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

The omnipresent spirit which extends over the space of the heart, the size of a finger, is the most pure light. He is the Lord of past and future events ; He alone pervades *the universe* now and ever ; He is that existence which thou desiredst to know. In the same way as water falling on uneven ground disperses throughout the hollow places, and is lost, so a man who thinks that the souls of different bodies are distinct in nature from each other, shall be placed in various forms by transmigration.

As water falling on even grounds remains unchanged, so the soul of a wise man of steady mind is *always* pure, freed from the idea of duality.

*End of the first Section of the second Chapter (4th Bullee.)*

The body is a dwelling with eleven gates, belonging to the unborn and unchangeable spirit, through whose constant contemplation man escapes from grief, and acquiring absorption, is exempted from transmigration. He is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

That spiritual Being *acts always* and moves in heaven ; preserves all material existence as depending on him ; moves in space ; resides in fire ; walks on the earth ; enters like a guest into sacrificial vessels ; dwells in man, in gods, in sacrifices ; moves throughout the sky ; seems to be born in water, *as fishes, &c.* ; produced on earth, *as vegetables*, on the tops of mountains, *as rivers*, and also as members of sacrifices : yet is he truly pure and great. He who causes breath to ascend above the heart and peditum to descend, resides in the heart : He is adorable ; and to him all the senses offer oblation of the objects which they perceive.

When the soul, which is connected with the body, leaves it, nothing then remains in the body which may preserve the system : It is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

Neither by the help of breath, nor from the presence of other powers, can a mortal exist : but they all exist owing to that other existence on which both breath and the senses rest.

I will now disclose to you the secret doctrine of the eternal God ; and also how man, *void of that knowledge*, O Goutum ! transmigrates after death.

Some of those *who are ignorant of this doctrine* enter after death the womb of females to appear in the animal shape, while others assume the form of trees, according to their conduct and knowledge *during their lives*.

The Being who continues to operate even at that time of sleep, when all the senses cease to act, and then creates desirable objects of various descriptions, is pure and the greatest of all ; and he alone is called eternal, on whom all the world rests, and independently of whom nothing can exist : He is that existence which thou desiredst to know. As fire, although one in essence, on becoming visible in the world, appears in various forms and shapes, according to its different locations, so God, the soul of the universe, though one, appears in various modes, according as he connects himself with different material objects, and, *like space*, extends over all.

As air, although one in essence, in becoming operative in the body appears in various natures, as breath and other vital airs, so God, the soul of the universe, though one, appears in different modes, according as he connects himself with various material objects, and, *like space*, extends over all.

As the sun, though he serves as the eye of all living creatures, yet is not polluted externally or internally by being connected with visible vile objects, so God, the soul of the universe, although one and omnipresent, is not affected by the sensations of individual pain, for he is beyond its action.

God is but one ; and he has the whole world under his control, for he is the operating soul in all objects : He, *through his omniscience*, makes his sole existence appear in the form of the universe. To those wise men who acquire a knowledge of him who is operative on the human faculties, is eternal beatitude allotted, and not to those who are void of that knowledge.

God is eternal amidst the perishable universe ; and is the source of sensation among all animate existences ; and he alone assigns to so many objects their respective purposes : To those wise men who know him the ruler of the intellectual power, everlasting beatitude is allotted ; but not to those who are void of that knowledge.

How can I acquire that most gratifying divine knowledge, which, though beyond comprehension, *wise men, by constant application of mind, alone obtain*, as if it were present ? Does it shine conspicuously?—and does it appear to the human faculties?

Neither the sun, nor the moon, nor yet the stars can throw light on God : Even the illuminating lightning cannot throw light upon him ; much less can limited fire give him light : But they all imitate him, and all borrow their light from him—*that is, nothing can influence God and render him perspicuous : But God himself imparts his knowledge to the heart freed from passion and desire.*

*End of the second Section of the second Chapter (5th Bullee.)*

The world is a fig-tree of long duration, whose origin is above, and the branches of which, *as different species*, are below. The origin alone is pure and supreme ; and he alone is eternal on whom all the world rests, and independently of whom nothing can exist. He is that existence which thou desiredst to know.

God being eternal existence, the universe, whatsoever it is, exists and proceeds from him. He is the great dread of all *heavenly bodies*, as if he were prepared to strike them with thunderbolts ; *so that none of them can deviate from their respective courses established by him*. Those who know him as the eternal power acquire absorption.

Through his fear fire supplies *us* with heat ; and the sun, through his fear, shines *regularly* ; and also Indru, and air, and fifthly, death, are through his fear constantly in motion.

If *man* can acquire a knowledge of God in this world, before the fall of his body, *he becomes happy for ever* : Otherwise he assumes new forms in different mansions. *A knowledge of God shines* on the purified intellect in this world, as clearly as an object is seen by reflection in a polished mirror : In the region of the deified Progenitors of mankind *it is viewed* as obscurely as objects perceived in the state of dreaming ; and in the mansion of Gundhurvus, in the same degree as the reflection of an object on water ; but in the mansion of Bruhmá it appears as distinctly as the difference between light and darkness.

A wise man, knowing the soul to be distinct from the senses, which proceed from different origins, and also from the state of waking and of sleep, never again grieves.

The mind is more refined than the external senses ; and the intellect is again more exalted than the mind. The prime sensitive particle is superior to the intellect ;—nature, the apparent cause of the universe, is again superior to that particle unaffected by matter : *Superior to nature is God*, who is omnipresent and without material effects ; by acquisition of whose knowledge man becomes extricated from ignorance and distress, and is absorbed into Him *after death*. His substance does not come within the

reach of vision ; no one can apprehend him through the senses : By constant direction of the intellect, free from doubts, he perspicuously appears ; and those who know him in the prescribed manner, enjoy eternal life. •

That part of life wherein the power of the five external senses and the mind are directed towards the Supreme Spirit, and the intellectual power ceases its action, is said to be most sacred ; and this steady control of the senses and mind is considered to be *Yog* (or withdrawing the senses and the mind from worldly objects): Man should be vigilant in the acquisition of that state ; for such control proceeds from constant exercise, and ceases by neglect.

Neither through speech, nor through intellectual power, nor yet through vision, can man acquire a knowledge of God ; but, save him who believes in the existence of God *as the cause of the universe*, no one can have a notion of that Being. A man should acquire, first, a belief in the existence of God, the origin of the universe ; and next, a real knowledge of him ; to wit, that he is incomprehensible ; for the means which lead men to acquire a knowledge of his existence, graciously conduct them to the belief of his incomprehensibility. When all the desires settled in the heart leave man, the mortal then become immortal, and acquire absorption even in this life. When the deep ignorance *which occasions duality* is entirely destroyed, the mortal become immortal : This is the only doctrine which *the Vedant* inculcates.

There are one hundred and one tubes connected with the heart, one of *which*, called *Sookhumna*, proceeds to the head : The soul of a devotee proceeding through the hundred and first, is carried to the mansion of the immortal Bruhmá ; and those of others, which ascend by other tubes, assume different bodies, according to the evil or good acts which they perform.

The omnipresent eternal spirit resides always within that space of the human heart which is as large as a finger : Man should, by firmness of mind, separate that spirit from the body, in the same manner as the pith is removed from the plant Moon-

ju : *that is, the spirit should be considered totally distinct from matter and the effects of matter*—and man should know that separated spirit to be pure and eternal.

Having thus acquired this divine doctrine, imparted by the God of death, with every thing belonging to it, Nuchiketa, freed from the consequences of good or evil acts, and from mortality, was absorbed into God ; and whatever person also can acquire that knowledge, shall obtain absorption.

*End of the third Section of the second Chapter (6th Bullee.)*

*End of the Kut'h-opunishud.*





TRANSLATION  
OF THE  
ISHOPANISHAD,

One of the chapters of the

YAJUR VED :

ACCORDING TO THE COMMENTARY OF THE CELEBRATED

SHANKAR-ACHARYA :

ESTABLISHING THE UNITY AND INCOMPREHENSIBILITY OF

THE SUPREME BEING ;

AND THAT

HIS WORSHIP ALONE

CAN LEAD TO ETERNAL BEATITUDE.

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CALCUTTA :

1816.



## P R E F A C E.

THE most learned Vyasa shows, in his work of the Vedant, that all the texts of the Ved, with one consent, prove but the Divinity of that Being, who is out of the reach of comprehension and beyond all description. For the use of the public, I have made a concise translation of that celebrated work into Bengalee, and the present is an endeavour to translate\* the principal Chapters of the Ved, in conformity to the Comments of the great Shankar-Acharya. The translation of the Ishopanishad belonging to the Yajur, the second division of the Veds, being already completed, I have put it into the press ;† and the others will successively be printed, as soon as their translation is completed. It is evident, from those authorities, that the sole regulator of the Universe is but one, who is omnipresent, far surpassing our powers of comprehension ; above external sense ; and whose worship is the chief duty of mankind and the sole cause of eternal beatitude ; and that all that bear figure and appellation are inventions. Should it be asked, whether the assertions found in the Puranas‡ and Tantras, &c. respecting the worship of the several gods and goddesses, are false, or whether Puranas and Tantras are not included in the Shastra, the answer is this :—The Purana and Tantra,§ &c. are of course to be considered as Shastra, for they repeatedly declare God to be one and above the apprehension of external and internal senses ; they indeed expressly de-

\* I must confess how much I feel indebted to Doctor H. H. Wilson, in my translations from Sunskrit into English, for the use of his Sunskrit and English Dictionary.

† Wherever any comment, upon which the sense of the original depends, is added to the original, it will be found written in Italics.

‡ Said to have been written by Vyas.

§ Supposed to have been composed by Shiva.

clare the divinity of many gods and goddesses, and the modes of their worship ; but they reconcile those contradictory assertions by affirming frequently, that the directions to worship any figured beings are only applicable to those, who are incapable of elevating their minds to the idea of an invisible Supreme Being, in order that such persons, by fixing their attention on those invented figures, may be able to restrain themselves from vicious temptations, and that those that are competent for the worship of the invisible God, should disregard the worship of Idols. I repeat a few of these declarations as follows. The authority of Jamadagni is thus quoted by the great Raghunandan : " For the benefit of those who are inclined to worship, figures are invented to serve as representations of God, who is merely understanding, and has no second, no parts nor figure ; consequently, to these representatives, either male or female forms and other circumstances are fictitiously assigned." In the second Chapter of the first part of the Vishnu Purana it is said ; " God is without figure, epithet, definition or description. He is without defect not liable to annihilation, change, pain or birth ; we can only say, That he, who is the eternal being, is God." " The vulgar look for their gods in water ; men of more extended knowledge in celestial bodies ; the ignorant in wood, bricks, and stones ; but learned men in the universal soul." In the 84th Chapter of the tenth division of the Sri Bhagavat, Crishna says to Vyas and others : " It is impossible for those who consider pilgrimage as devotion, and believe that the divine nature exists in the image, to look up to, communicate with, to petition and to revere true believers in God. He who views as the soul this body formed of phlegm, wind and bile, or regards only wife, children, and relations as himself (that is, he who neglects to contemplate the nature of the soul), he who attributes a divine nature to earthen images, and believes in the holiness of water, yet pays not such respect to those who are endowed with a knowledge of God, is as an ass amongst cows."

In the 9th Chapter of the Cularnava it is written : " A know-

“ledge of the Supreme Being, who is beyond the power of expression and unchangeable, being acquired, all gods and goddesses, and their texts which represent them, shall become slaves.” “After a knowledge of the Supreme Being has been attained, there is no need to attend to ceremonies prescribed by Shastras—no want of a fan should be felt, when a soft southern wind is found to refresh.” The Mahanirvana says, “Thus corresponding to the natures of different powers or qualities, numerous figures have been invented for the benefit of those who are not possessed of sufficient understanding.” From the foregoing quotations it is evident, that though the Veds, Puranas, and Tantras, frequently assert the existence of the plurality of gods and goddesses, and prescribe the modes of their worship for men of insufficient understanding, yet they have also declared in a hundred other places, that these passages are to be taken merely in a figurative sense.

It cannot be alleged in support of Idolatry, that “although a knowledge of God is certainly above all things, still as it is impossible to acquire that knowledge, men should of course worship figured Gods ;” for, had it been impossible to attain a knowledge of the Supreme Being, the Veds and Puranas, as well as Tantras, would not have instructed mankind to aim at such attainment ; as it is not to be supposed that directions to acquire what is obviously unattainable could be given by the Shastra, or even by a man of common sense. Should the Idolator say, “that the acquisition of a knowledge of God, although it is not impossible, is most difficult of comprehension,” I will agree with him in that point ; but infer from it, that we ought, therefore, the more to exert ourselves to acquire that knowledge ; but I highly lament to observe, that so far from endeavouring to make such an acquisition, the very proposal frequently excites his anger and displeasure.

Neither can it be alleged that the Veds, Puranas, &c. teach both the adoration of the Supreme Being and that of celestial gods and goddesses, but that the former is intended for Yatis

or those that are bound by their profession to forsake all worldly considerations, and the latter for laymen ; for, it is evident from the 48th Text of the 3d Chapter of the Vedant that a householder also is required to perform the worship of the Supreme Being.

Menu, also, the chief of Hindoo lawgivers, after having prescribed all the varieties of rites and ceremonies, in Chapter 12th, Text 92, says, "Thus must the chief of the twice-born, though he neglect the ceremonial rites mentioned in the Shastras, be diligent in attaining a knowledge of God, in controlling his organs of sense, and in repeating the Ved."

Again in the 4th Chapter, in describing the duties of laymen, the same author says, "Some, who well know the ordinances for the oblations, do not perform externally the five great sacraments, but continually make offerings in their own organs of *sensation and intellect*."

"Some constantly sacrifice their breath in their speech, *when they instruct others of God aloud*, and their speech in their breath, *when they mediate in silence*, perceiving in their speech and breath thus employed the imperishable fruit of a sacrificial offering."

"Other Brahmins incessantly perform those sacrifices only, seeing with the eye of divine learning, that the scriptural knowledge is the root of every ceremonial observance."

In the Yagnyavalca (Smriti) it is written :—"Even a householder, who acquires a livelihood honestly, has faith in the Supreme Being, shows hospitality to his guests, performs sacramental rites to his forefathers, and is in the practice of telling truth, shall be absorbed into the supreme essence." Should it be said, "It still remains unaccountable, that notwithstanding the Veds and Purans repeatedly declare the unity of the Supreme Being, and direct mankind to adore him alone, yet the generality of Hindoos have a contrary faith, and continue to practise idolatry," I would in answer request attention to the foundation on which the practical part of the Hindoo religion is built. Many learned Brahmins are perfectly aware of the

absurdity of idolatry, and are well informed of the nature of the purer mode of divine worship. But as in the rites, ceremonies, and festivals of idolatry, they find the source of their comforts and fortune, they not only never fail to protect idol worship from all attacks, but even advance and encourage it to the utmost of their power, by keeping the knowledge of their scriptures concealed from the rest of the people. Their followers too, confiding in these leaders, feel gratification in the idea of the Divine Nature residing in a being resembling themselves in birth, shape, and propensities ; and are naturally delighted with a mode of worship agreeable to the senses, though destructive of moral principles, and the fruitful parent of prejudice and superstition.

Some Europeans, indued with high principles of liberality, but unacquainted with the ritual part of Hindoo idolatry, are disposed to palliate it by an interpretation which, though plausible, is by no means well founded. They are willing to imagine, that the idols which the Hindoos worship, are not viewed by them in the light of gods or as real personifications of the divine attributes, but merely as instruments for raising their minds to the contemplation of those attributes, which are respectively represented by different figures. I have frequently had occasion to remark, that many Hindoos also who are conversant with the English language, finding this interpretation a more plausible apology for idolatry than any with which they are furnished by their own guides, do not fail to avail themselves of it, though in repugnance both to their faith and to their practice. The declarations of this description of Hindoos naturally tend to confirm the original idea of such Europeans, who from the extreme absurdity of pure unqualified idolatry, deduce an argument against its existence. It appears to them impossible for men, even in the very last degree of intellectual darkness, to be so far misled as to consider a mere image of wood or of stone as a *human being*, much less as divine existence. With a view, therefore, to do away any misconception of this nature which may have prevailed, I beg leave to submit the following considerations.



Hindoos of the present age, with a very few exceptions, have not the least idea that it is to the attributes of the Supreme Being, as figuratively represented by shapes corresponding to the nature of those attributes, they offer adoration and worship under the denomination of gods and goddesses. On the contrary, the slightest investigation will clearly satisfy every inquirer, that it makes a material part of their system to hold as articles of faith all those particular circumstances, which are essential to a belief in the independent existence of the objects of their idolatry as deities clothed with divine power.

Locality of habitation and a mode of existence analogous to their own views of earthly things, are uniformly ascribed to each particular god. Thus the devotees of Siva, misconceiving the real spirit of the Scriptures, not only place an implicit credence in the separate existence of Siva, but even regard him as an omnipotent being, the greatest of all the divinities, who, as they say, inhabit the northern mountain of Cailas ; and that he is accompanied by two wives and several children, and surrounded with numerous attendants. In like manner the followers of Vishnu, mistaking the allegorical representations of the Sastras for relations of real facts, believe him to be chief over all other gods, and that he resides with his wife and attendants on the summit of heaven. Similar opinions are also held by the worshippers of Cali, in respect to that goddess. And in fact, the same observations are equally applicable to every class of Hindoo devotees in regard to their respective gods and goddesses. And so tenacious are those devotees in respect to the honour due to their chosen divinities, that when they meet in such holy places as Haridwar, Pryag, Siva-Canchi, or Vishnu-Canchi in the Dekhin, the adjustment of the point of precedence not only occasions the warmest verbal altercations, but sometimes even blows and violence. Neither do they regard the images of those gods merely in the light of instruments for elevating the mind to the conception of those supposed beings ; they are simply in themselves made objects of worship. For whatever Hindoo purchases an idol in the market,

or constructs one with his own hands, or has one made under his own superintendence, it is his invariable practice to perform certain ceremonies, called Prán Pratisht'ha, or the endowment of animation, by which he believes that its nature is changed from that of the mere materials of which it is formed, and that it acquires not only life but supernatural powers. Shortly afterwards, if the idol be of the masculine gender, he marries it to a feminine one, with no less pomp and magnificence than he celebrates the nuptials of his own children. The mysterious process is now complete, and the god and goddess are esteemed the arbiters of his destiny, and continually receive his most ardent adoration.

At the same time, the worshipper of images ascribes to them at once the opposite natures of human and of super-human beings. In attention to their supposed wants as living beings, he is seen feeding, or pretending to feed them every morning and evening; and as in the hot season he is careful to fan them, so in the cold he is equally regardful of their comfort, covering them by day with warm clothing, and placing them at night in a snug bed. But superstition does not find a limit here: the acts and speeches of the idols, and their assumption of various shapes and colours, are gravely related by the Brahmins, and with all the marks of veneration are firmly believed by their deluded followers. Other practices they have with regard to those idols which decency forbids me to explain. In thus endeavouring to remove a mistake, into which I have reason to believe many European gentlemen have been led by a benevolent wish to find an excuse for the errors of my countrymen, it is a considerable gratification to me to find that the latter have begun to be so far sensible of the absurdity of their real belief and practices, as to find it convenient to shelter them under such a cloak, however flimsy and borrowed. The adoption of such a subterfuge encourages me greatly to hope, that they will in time abandon what they are sensible cannot be defended; and that, forsaking the superstition of idolatry, they will embrace the

rational worship of the God of Nature, as enjoined by the Veds and confirmed by the dictates of common sense.

The argument which is frequently alleged in support of idolatry is that "those who believe God to be omnipresent, as declared by the doctrines of the Vedant, are required by the tenets of such belief to look upon all existing creatures as God, and to shew divine respect to birds, beasts, men, women, vegetables, and all other existences ; and as practical conformity to such doctrines is almost impossible, the worship of figured gods should be admitted." This misrepresentation, I am sorry to observe, entirely serves the purpose intended, by frightening Hindoos in general from attending to the pure worship of the Supreme Regulator of the universe. But I am confident that the least reflection on the subject will clear up this point beyond all doubt ; for the Vedant is well known as a work which inculcates only the unity of God ; but if every existing creature should be taken for a god by the followers of the Vedant, the doctrines of that work must be admitted to be much more at variance with that idea than those of the advocates of idolatry, as the latter are contented with the recognition of only a few millions of gods and goddesses, but the Vedant in that case must be supposed to admit the divinity of every living creature in nature. The fact is, that the Vedant, by declaring that "God is every where, and every thing is in God," means that nothing is absent from God, and nothing bears real existence except by the volition of God, whose existence is the sole support of the conceived existence of the universe, which is acted upon by him in the same manner as a human body is by a soul. But God is at the same time quite different from what we see or feel.

The following texts of the Vedant are to this effect (11th text of the 2nd section of the 3rd chapter of the Vedant) : "That being, which is distinct from matter, and from those which are contained in matter, is not various, because he is declared by all the Veds to be one beyond description ;" and again, "The Ved has declared the Supreme Being to be mere

“understanding.” Moreover, if we look at the conduct of the ancient true believers in God, as Janaca, the celebrated prince of Mithila, Vasisht’ha, Sanaca, Vyasa, Sancaracharyu, and others whose characters as believers in one God are well known to the public by their doctrines and works, which are still in circulation, we shall find that these teachers, although they declared their faith in the omnipresent God according to the doctrines of the Vedant, assigned to every creature the particular character and respect he was entitled to. It is, however, extremely remarkable, that the very argument which they employ to shew the impossibility of practical conformity to faith in the omnipresence of God, may be alleged against every system of their own idolatry ; for the believers in the godhead of Crishna, and the devotees of Cali, as well as the followers of Siva, believe firmly in the omnipresence of Crishna,\* Cali,† and Siva,‡ respectively. The authorities, then, for the worship of those gods, in declaring their omnipresence, would according to their own argument, enjoin the worship of every creature as much as of those supposed divinities. Omnipresence, however, is an attribute much more consonant with the idea of a Supreme Being than with that of any fictitious figure to which they pay divine honours ! Another argument is, that “ No man can have, as it is said by the Sastra, a desire of knowledge respecting the Supreme Being, unless his mind be purified ; and as idol worship purifies men’s minds, it should be therefore attended to.” I admit the truth of the first part of this argument, as a desire of the acquisition of a knowledge of God is an indication of an improved mind ; consequently whenever we see a person possessed of that desire, we should attribute it to some degree of purification ; but I must affirm with the Ved, that purity of mind is the consequence of divine worship, and not of any superstitious practices.

\* Vide 10th chapter of the Gita.

† Vide 23d text of the chap. 11th of the Debi-mahatmya.

‡ Vide Rudra mahatmya in the Dan-dharina.

The Vrihadaranyaca says, "Adore God alone." Again, "Nothing excepting the Supreme Being should be adored by wise men." "God alone rules the mind, and relieves it from impurity."

The last of the principal arguments which are alleged in favour of idolatry is, that it is established by custom. "Let the authors of the Veds, Purans, and Tantras," it is said, "assert what they may in favour of devotion to the Supreme Being, but idol worship has been practised for so many centuries that custom renders it proper to continue that worship." It is however evident to every one possessed of common sense, that custom or fashion is quite different from divine faith; the latter proceeding from spiritual authorities and correct reasoning, and the former being merely the fruit of vulgar caprice.

What can justify a man, who believes in the inspiration of his religious books, in neglecting the direct authorities of the same works, and subjecting himself entirely to custom and fashion, which are liable to perpetual changes and depend upon popular whim? But it cannot be passed unnoticed that those who practise idolatry and defend it under the shield of custom, have been violating their customs almost every twenty years, for the sake of little convenience, or to promote their wordly advantage: a few instances which are most commonly and publicly practised, I beg leave to state here.

1st. The whole community in Bengal, with very few exceptions, have, since the middle of last century, forsaken their ancient modes of the performance of ceremonial rites of religion, and followed the precepts of the late Raghunandan, and consequently differ in the most essential points of ceremonies from the natives of Behar, Tirhoot, and Benares. 2nd. The system of their subdivisions in each caste, with the modes of marriage and inter-marriage, is also a modern introduction altogether contrary to their law and ancient customs. 3rd. The profession of instructing European gentlemen in the Veds, Smriti and Purans, is a violation of their long established custom; and, 4th. The supply-

ing their European guests with wine and victuals in presence of their gods and goddesses is also a direct breach of custom and law. I may conclude this subject with an appeal to the good sense of my countrymen, by asking them, “whose advice appears the most disinterested and most rational—that of those who, concealing your scriptures from you, continually teach you thus, ‘Believe whatever we may say—don’t examine or even touch your scriptures, neglect entirely your reasoning faculties—do not only consider us, whatever may be our principles, as gods on earth, but humbly adore and propitiate us by sacrificing to us the greater part (if not the whole) of your property :’ or that of the man who lays your scriptures and their comments as well as their translations before you, and solicits you to examine their purport, without neglecting the proper and moderate use of reason ; and to attend strictly to their directions, by the rational performance of your duty to your sole Creator, and to your fellow creatures, and also to pay true respect to those who think and act righteously.” I hope no one can be so prejudiced as to be unable to discern which advice is most calculated to lead him to the best road to both temporal and eternal happiness.



## INTRODUCTION.

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THE physical powers of man are limited, and when viewed comparatively, sink into insignificance ; while in the same ratio, his moral faculties rise in our estimation, as embracing a wide sphere of action, and possessing a capability of almost boundless improvement. If the short duration of human life be contrasted with the great age of the universe, and the limited extent of bodily strength with the many objects to which there is a necessity of applying it, we must necessarily be disposed to entertain but a very humble opinion of our own nature ; and nothing perhaps is so well calculated to restore our self-complacency as the contemplation of our more extensive moral powers, together with the highly beneficial objects which the appropriate exercise of them may produce.

On the other hand, sorrow and remorse can scarcely fail, sooner or later, to be the portion of him who is conscious of having neglected opportunities of rendering benefit to his fellow-creatures. From considerations like these it has been that I (although born a Brahmin, and instructed in my youth in all the principles of that sect), being thoroughly convinced of the lamentable errors of my countrymen, have been stimulated to employ every means in my power to improve their minds, and lead them to the knowledge of a purer system of morality. Living constantly amongst Hindoos of different sects and professions, I have had ample opportunity of observing the superstitious puerilities into which they have been thrown by their self-interested guides, who, in defiance of the law as well as of common sense, have succeeded but too well in conducting them to the temple of idolatry ; and while they hid from their view the true substance of morality, have infused into their simple hearts a weak attachment for its mere shadow.



For the chief part of the theory and practice of Hindooism, I am sorry to say, is made to consist in the adoption of a peculiar mode of diet ; the least aberration from which (even though the conduct of the offender may in other respects be pure and blameless) is not only visited with the severest censure, but actually punished by exclusion from the society of his family and friends. In a word, he is doomed to undergo what is commonly called loss of caste.

On the contrary, the rigid observance of this grand article of Hindoo faith is considered in so high a light as to compensate for every moral defect. Even the most atrocious crimes weigh little or nothing in the balance against the supposed guilt of its violation.

Murder, theft, or perjury, though brought home to the party by a judicial sentence, so far from inducing loss of caste, is visited in their society with no peculiar mark of infamy or disgrace.

A trifling present to the Brahmin, commonly called *Práyas-chit*, with the performance of a few idle ceremonies, are held as a sufficient atonement for all those crimes ; and the delinquent is at once freed from all temporal inconvenience, as well as all dread of future retribution.

My reflections upon these solemn truths have been most painful for many years. I have never ceased to contemplate with the strongest feelings of regret, the obstinate adherence of my countrymen to their fatal system of idolatry, inducing, for the sake of propitiating their supposed Deities, the violation of every humane and social feeling. And this in various instances ; but more especially in the dreadful acts of self-destruction and the immolation of the nearest relations, under the delusion of conforming to sacred religious rites. I have never ceased, I repeat, to contemplate these practices with the strongest feelings of regret, and to view in them the moral debasement of a race who, I cannot help thinking, are capable of better things ; whose susceptibility, patience, and mildness of character, render them worthy of a better destiny. Under these impressions, therefore, I

have been impelled to lay before them genuine translations of parts of their scripture, which inculcates not only the enlightened worship of one God, but the purest principles of morality, accompanied with such notices as I deemed requisite to oppose the arguments employed by the Brahmins in defence of their beloved system. Most earnestly do I pray that the whole may, sooner or later, prove efficient in producing on the minds of Hindoos in general, a conviction of the rationality of believing in and adoring the Supreme Being only ; together with a complete perception and practice of that grand and comprehensive moral principle—*Do unto others as ye would be done by.*



# ISHOPANISHAD

OF THE

## YAJUR VED.

1st. ALL the material extension in this world, whatsoever it may be, should be considered as clothed with the existence of the Supreme regulating spirit : by thus abstracting thy mind *from wordly thoughts*, preserve thyself *from self-sufficiency*, and entertain not a covetous regard for property belonging to any individual.

2nd. Let man desire to live a whole century, practising, in this world, during that time, religious rites ; because for such A SELFISH MIND AS THINE, besides the observance of these rites, there is no other mode the practice of which would not subject thee to evils.

3rd. THOSE THAT NEGLECT THE CONTEMPLATION OF THE SUPREME SPIRIT, *either by devoting themselves solely to the performance of the ceremonies of religion, or by living destitute of religious ideas, shall, after death, ASSUME THE STATE OF DEMONS, such as that of the celestial gods, and of other created beings, WHICH ARE SURROUNDED WITH THE DARKNESS OF IGNORANCE.*

4th. The Supreme Spirit is one and unchangeable : he proceeds more rapidly than the comprehending power of the mind : Him no external sense can apprehend, for a knowledge of him outruns even the internal sense : He, though free from motion, seems to advance, leaving behind human intellect, which strives to attain a knowledge respecting him : He being the eternal ruler, the atmosphere regulates under him the whole system of the world.

5th. He, the Supreme Being, seems to move every where,

although he in reality has no motion; he seems to be distant from those who have no wish to attain a knowledge respecting him, and he seems to be near to those who feel a wish to know him: but, in fact, He pervades the internal and external parts of this whole universe.

6th. He, who perceives the whole universe in the Supreme Being (*that is, he who perceives that the material existence is merely dependent upon the existence of the Supreme Spirit*); and who also perceives the Supreme Being in the whole universe (*that is, he who perceives that the Supreme Spirit extends over all material extension*); does not feel contempt towards any creature whatsoever.

7th. When a person possessed of true knowledge conceives that God extends over the whole universe (*that is, that God furnishes every particle of the universe with the light of his existence*), how can he, as an observer of the real unity of the pervading Supreme existence, be affected with infatuation or grievance?

8th. He overspreads all creatures: is merely spirit, without the form either of any minute body, or of an extended one, which is liable to impression or organization: He is pure, perfect, omniscient, the ruler of the intellect, omnipresent, and the self-existent: He has from eternity been assigning to all creatures their respective purposes.

9th. Those observers of religious rites that perform only the worship of the sacred fire, and oblations to sages, to ancestors, to men, and to other creatures, without regarding the worship of celestial gods, shall enter into the dark regions: and those practisers of religious ceremonies who habitually worship the celestial gods only, disregarding the worship of the sacred fire, and oblations to sages, to ancestors, to men, and to other creatures, shall enter into a region still darker than the former.

10th. It is said that adoration of the celestial gods produces one consequence; and that the performance of the worship of sacred fire, and oblations to sages, to ancestors, to men, and to

other creatures, produce another : thus have we heard from learned men who have distinctly explained the subject to us.

11th. Of those observers of ceremonies whosoever, knowing that adoration of celestial gods, as well as the worship of the sacred fire, and oblation to sages, to ancestors, to men, and to other creatures, should be observed alike by the same individual, performs them both, will, by means of the latter, surmount the obstacles presented by natural temptations, and will attain the state of the celestial gods through the practice of the former.

12th. Those observers of religious rites who worship Prakriti\* alone, shall enter into the dark region : and those practisers of religious ceremonies that are devoted to worship solely the prior operating sensitive particle, allegorically called Bruhma, shall enter into a region much more dark than the former.

13th. It is said that one consequence may be attained by the worship of Bruhma, and another by the adoration of Prakriti. Thus have we heard from learned men, who have distinctly explained the subject to us.

14th. Of those observers of ceremonies, whatever person, knowing that the adoration of Prakriti and that of Bruhma should be together observed by the same individual, performs them both, will by means of the latter overcome indigence, and will attain the state of Prakriti, through the practice of the former.

15th. "Thou hast, O sun," (*says to the sun a person agitated on the approach of death, who during his life attended to the performance of religious rites, neglecting the attainment of a knowledge of God,*) "thou hast, O sun, concealed by thy illuminating body the way to the true Being, who rules in thee. Take off that veil for the guidance of me thy true devotee."

16th. "O thou" (continues he), "who nourishest the world, movest singly, and who dost regulate the whole mundane system—O sun, son of Cushyup, disperse thy rays for my

\* Prakriti (or nature) who, though insensible, influenced by the Supreme Spirit, operates throughout the universe.

“passage, and withdraw thy violent light, so that I may by thy grace behold thy most prosperous aspect.” “*Why should I*” (says he, again retracting himself on reflecting upon the true divine nature), “*why should I entreat the sun, as I AM WHAT HE IS,*” that is, “*the Being who rules in the sun rules also in me.*”

17th. “Let my breath,” resumes he, “be absorbed after death into the wide atmosphere ; and let this my body be burnt to ashes. O my intellect, think now on what may be beneficial to me. O fire, remember what religious rites I have hitherto performed.”

18th. “O illuminating fire,” continues he, “observing all our religious practices, carry us by the right path to the enjoyment of the consequence of our deeds, and put an end to our sins ; we being now unable to perform thy various rites, offer to thee our last saluation.”\*

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\* This example from the Veds, of the unhappy agitation and wavering of an idolater on the approach of death, ought to make men reflect seriously on the miserable consequence of fixing their mind on any other object of adoration but the one Supreme Being.

A  
TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH  
OF A  
SUNSKRIT TRACT,  
INCULCATING  
THE DIVINE WORSHIP;  
ESTEEMED  
BY THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE REVELATION OF THE VEDS AS MOST  
APPROPRIATE TO THE NATURE OF  
THE SUPREME BEING.

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CALCUTTA :

1827.





PRESCRIPT  
 " FOR  
 OFFERING SUPREME WORSHIP  
 BY MEANS OF  
 THE GAYUTREE,  
 THE MOST SACRED TEXT OF THE VEDS.

THUS says the illustrious Munoo : "The three great immutable words (Bhooh, Bhoovuh, Swuh, or earth, space, heaven), preceded by the letter Om ;\* and also the Gayutree, consist-

\* Om, when considered as one letter uttered by the help of one articulation, is the symbol of the Supreme Spirit. It is derived from the radical *अ* to preserve, with the affix *मन्*. "One letter (Om) is the emblem of "the Most High."—*Munoo*, II. 83. "This one letter, Om, is the emblem "of the Supreme Being."—*Bhuguvudgeeta*. It is true that this emblem conveys two sounds, that of *o* and of *m*, nevertheless it is held to be one letter in the above sense ; and we meet with instances even in the ancient and modern languages of Europe that can justify such privileges ; such as  $\Xi$  (Xi) and  $\Psi$  (Psi) reckoned single letters in Greek, and Q, W, X, in English and others. But when considered as a triliteral word consisting of *अ, उ, म्*, Om implies the three Veds, the three states of human nature, the three divisions of the universe, and the three deities, Bruhma, Vishnoo and Shivu, agents in the creation, preservation, and destruction of this world ; or, properly speaking, the three principal attributes of the Supreme Being personified as Bruhma, Vishnoo, and Shivu. In this sense it implies in fact, the universe controlled by the Supreme Spirit.

In all the Hindoo treatises of philosophy (the Poorans or didactic parables excepted), the methodical collection or expansion of matter is understood by the term creation, the gradual or sudden perversion of order is intended by destruction, and the power which wards off the latter from the former is meant by preservation.

"ing of three measured lines, must be considered as the entrance  
"to divine bliss."\*

"Whoever shall repeat them day by day, for three years,  
"without negligence, shall approach the most High God, become  
"*free as air, and acquire after death an ethereal essence.*"

"From the three Veds the most exalted Bruhma successively  
"milked out the three lines of this sacred text, beginning with  
"*the word Tut and entitled Savitree or Gayutree.*"

Yogee Yajnuvulkyu also declares, "By means of Om, Bhooh,  
"Bhoovuh, and Swuh ; and the Gayutree, collectively or each of  
"the three singly, the most High God, the source of intellect,  
"should be worshipped."

"So Bruhma himself formerly defined Bhooh, Bhoovuh,  
"Swuh, (Earth, Space, Heaven) as the body of the Supreme  
"Intelligence ; hence these *three words* are called the Defined."

[Those that maintain the doctrine of the universe being the  
body of the Supreme Spirit, found their opinion upon the follow-  
ing considerations :

1st. That there are innumerable millions of bodies, properly  
speaking worlds, in the infinity of space.

2dly. That they move, mutually preserving their regular  
intervals between each other, and that they maintain each other  
by producing effects primary or secondary, as the members of  
the body support each other.

3dly. That those bodies, when viewed collectively, are con-

The reason the authors offer for this interpretation is, that they, in com-  
mon with others, are able to acquire a notion of a Superintending Power,  
though unfelt and invisible, solely through their observation of material  
phenomena ; and that should they reject this medium of conviction, and  
force upon themselves a belief of the production of matter from nothing,  
and of its liability to entire annihilation, then nothing would remain in the  
ordinary course of reasoning to justify their maintaining any longer a  
notion of that unknown Supreme Superintending Power.

\* The last clause admits of another interpretation, viz. "must be con-  
sidered as the mouth, or principal part of the Veds."

sidered one, in the same way as the members of an animal body or of a machine, taken together, constitute one whole.

4thly. Any material body whose members move methodically, and afford support to each other in a manner sufficient for their preservation, must be actuated either by an internal guiding power named the soul, or by an external one as impulse.

5thly. It is maintained that body is as infinite as space, because body is found to exist in space as far as our perceptions, with the naked eye or by the aid of instruments, enable us to penetrate.

6thly. If body be infinite as space, the power that guides its members must be internal, and therefore styled the SOUL, and not external, since there can be no existence, even in thought, without the idea of location.

Hence this sect suppose that the Supreme all-pervading power is the soul of the universe, both\* existing from eternity to eternity; and that the former has somewhat the same influence over the universe as the individual soul has over the individual body.

They argue further, that in proportion as the internally impelled body is excellent in its construction, the directing soul must be considered excellent. Therefore, inasmuch as the universe is infinite in extent, and is arranged with infinite skill, the soul by which it is animated must be infinite in every perfection.]

He (Yajnuvalkyu) again expounds the meaning of the Gayutree in three passages :

“ We, say the adorers of the Most High, meditate on the “Supreme and omnipresent internal spirit of this splendid Sun. “ We meditate on the same Supreme spirit, earnestly sought for “ by such as dread further mortal birth; who, residing in every body “ as the all-pervading soul and controller of the mind, constantly “ directs our intellect and intellectual operations towards *the acquisition of* virtue, wealth, physical enjoyment, and final beatitude.”

So, at the end of the Gayutree, the utterance of the letter Om is commanded by the sacred passage cited by Goonu-Vishnoo :

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\*•Human soul and the Supreme Spirit.—ED.

"A Brahmun shall in every instance pronounce Om, at the beginning and at the end; for unless the letter Om precede, *the desirable consequence* will fail; and unless it follow, it will not be long retained."

That the letter Om, which is pronounced at the beginning and at the end of the *Gayutree*, expressly signifies the Most High, is testified by the Ved: viz. "Thus through the help of Om, you contemplate the Supreme Spirit." (*Moonduk Oopunishud.*)

Munoo also calls to mind the purport of the same passage: "And rites obtained in the Ved, such as oblation to fire and solemn offerings, pass away; but the letter Om is considered that which passes not away; since it is a *symbol* of the most High the Lord of created beings."

"By the sole repetition of *Om* and the *Gayutree*, a Brahmun may indubitably attain beatitude. Let him perform or not perform any other religious rites, he being a friend to all creatures is styled a knower of God."

So Yogee Yajnuvulkyu says: "God is declared to be the object signified, and Om to be the term signifying: By means of a knowledge even of the letter Om, the symbol, God becomes propitious."

In the Bhuguvudgeeta: "Om\* (the cause), Tut† (that), Sut‡

\* "Om" implies the Being on whom all objects, either visible or invisible, depend in their formation, continuance, and change.

† "Tut" implies the being that can be described only by the demonstrative pronoun "that," and not by any particular definition.

‡ "Sut" implies what "truly exists" in one condition independent of others. These three terms collectively imply, that the object contemplated through "Om" can be described only as "that" which "is existing."

The first term "Om" bears a striking similarity, both in sound and application, to the participle "ων" of the verb "εμι" to be, in Greek; and it is therefore not very improbable that one might have had its origin from the other. As to the similarity in sound, it is too obvious to require illustration; and a reference to the Septuagint will shew that ων like "Om" is applied to Jehova the ever existing God. Exodus, iii, 14. "Εγω εμι δ Ων." "δ Ων απεσλακει με προς υμας."

“(existing), these are considered three kinds of description of “the Supreme Being.”

In the concluding part of the commentary on the Gayutree by the ancient Bhuttu Goonu-Vishnool, the meaning of the passage is briefly given by the same author.

“He the spirit who is thus described, guides us. He, as the “soul of the three mansions (*viz.* earth, space, and heaven), of “water, light, moisture, and the individual soul, of all moving “and fixed objects, and of Bruhma, Vishnool, Shivu, the Sun “and other gods of various descriptions, the Most High God, “illuminating, like a brilliant lamp, the seven mansions, having “carried my individual soul, as spirit, to the seventh heaven, “the mansion of the worshippers of God called the True mansion, “the residence of Bruhma, absorbs it (my soul), through his “divine spirit, into his own divine essence. The worshipper, “thus contemplating, shall repeat the Gayutree.”

Thus it is said by Rughoonundun Bhattacharyu, a modern expounder of law in the country of Gourr, when interpreting the passage beginning with “Prunuvu Vyahritibhyam :”\* “By “means of pronouncing Om and Bhooh, Bhoovuh, Swuh,† and the “Gayutree,‡ all signifying the Most High, and reflecting on their “meaning, the worship of God shall be performed, and his grace “enjoyed.”

And also in the Muha Nirvan Tuntru : “In like manner, “among all texts the Gayutree is declared to be the most excellent : the worshipper shall repeat it when inwardly pure, reflecting on the meaning of it. If the Gayutree be repeated with “Om and the Vyahriti (*viz.* Bhooh, Bhoovuh, Swuh), it excels “all other theistical knowledge, in producing immediate bliss. “Whosoever repeats it in the morning or evening or during the “night, while meditating on the Supreme Being, being freed “from all past sins, shall not be inclined to act unrighteously. “The worshipper shall first pronounce Om, then the three Vyahritis, and afterwards the Gayutree of three lines, and shall finish

\* मधुव्याहृतिभ्याम् — † ओं ह्रः सुवः स्वः — ‡ See page 101—Ed.

“it with the term Om. We meditate on him from whom proceed the continuance, perishing, and production of *all things* ; who spreads over the three mansions ; that eternal Spirit, who inwardly rules the sun and all living creatures ; most desirable and all-pervading ; and who, residing in intellect, directs the operations of the intellectual power of all of us material beings. The worshipper, by repeating every day these three texts expressing the above meaning, attains all desirable objects without any other religious observance or austerity. ‘One only without a second’ is the doctrine maintained by all the Oopunishuds : that imperishable and incomprehensible Being is understood by these three texts. Whoever repeats them once, or ten, or a hundred times, either alone or with many others, attains bliss in a proportionate degree. After he has completed the repetition, he shall again meditate on Him who is one only without a second, and all-pervading : thereby all religious observances, though not performed, shall have been virtually performed. Any one, whether a householder or not, whether a Brahmun or not, all have equal right to the use of these texts as found in the Tuntru.”

Here Om, in the first instance, signifies that Supreme Being who is the sole cause of the continuance, perishing, and production of all worlds. “He from whom these creatures are produced, by whom those that are produced exist, and to whom after death they return, is the Supreme Being, whom thou dost seek to know.”—The text of the Ved quoted by the revered Shunkur Acharyu in the Commentary on the first text of the Vedant Durshun.

The doubt whether or not that cause signified by “Om” exists separately from these effects, having arisen, the second text, Bhoor Bhoovuh Swuh, is next read, explaining that God, the sole cause, eternally exists pervading the universe, “Glorious, invisible, perfect, unbegotten, pervading all, internally and externally is *He the Supreme spirit*.”—*Moonduk Oopunishud*.

It being still doubted whether or not living creatures large and small in the world act independently of that sole cause, the Gayutree, as the third in order, is read. "Tut Suvitoor vuren-  
 "yum, Bhurgo devusyu dhæemuhi, dhiyo yo nuh pruchodtyat."\*  
 We meditate on that indescribable spirit inwardly ruling the splendid Sun, the express object of worship. He does not only inwardly rule the sun, but he, the spirit, residing in and inwardly ruling all us material beings, directs mental operations towards their objects. "He who inwardly rules the sun is the same immortal spirit who inwardly rules thee." (*Chhandoggu Oopunishud.*) "God resides in the heart of all creature."—*Bhuguvudgeeta.*

The object signified by the three texts being one, their repetition collectively is enjoined. The following is their meaning in brief.

"We meditate on the cause of all, pervading all, and internally ruling all material objects, from the sun down to us and others."

[The following is a literal translation of the Gayutree according to the English idiom: "We meditate on that Supreme Spirit of the splendid sun who directs our understandings."

The passage, however, may be rendered somewhat differently by transferring the demonstrative "that" from the words "Supreme Spirit" to the words "splendid sun." But this does not appear fully to correspond with the above interpretation of Yajñuvalkyu.]

• WHILE translating this essay on the Gayutree, I deemed it proper to refer to the meaning of the text as given by Sir William Jones, whose talents, acquisitions, virtuous life, and impartial research, have rendered his memory an object of love and veneration to all. I feel so much delighted by the excellence of the translation, or rather the paraphrase given by that illustrious

\* तत्सुविदुर्बरेण्य भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्—Ed.



character, that with a view to connect his name and his explanation of the passage with this humble treatise, I take the liberty of quoting it here.

The interpretation in question is as follows :

“ THE GAYATRI, OR HOLIEST VERSE OF THE VEDAS.”

“ Let us adore the supremacy of *that* divine sun,\* the god-head† who illuminates all, who recreates all, from whom all proceed, to whom all must return, whom we invoke to direct our understandings aright in our progress toward his holy seat.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ What the sun and light are to this visible world, that are the *Supreme good* and *truth* to the intellectual and invisible universe ; and, as our corporeal eyes have a distinct perception of objects enlightened by the sun, thus our souls acquire certain knowledge, by meditating on the light of truth, which emanates from the Being of beings : *that* is the light by which alone our minds can be directed in the path to beatitude.”

\* Opposed to the visible luminary.

† *Bhargas*, a word consisting of three consonants, derived from *bha*, to shine ; *ram*, to delight ; *gam*, to move.

A DEFENCE  
OF  
HINDOO THEISM,  
IN REPLY TO THE  
•  
ATTACK OF AN ADVOCATE FOR IDOLATRY  
AT MADRAS.

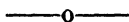
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CALCUTTA :

1817.



# A DEFENCE OF HINDOO THEISM.\*



BEFORE I attempt to reply to the observations that the learned gentleman, who signs himself Sankara Sastri, has offered in his letter of the 26th December last, addressed to the Editor of the Madras Courier, on the subject of an article published in the Calcutta Gazette, and on my translation of an abridgment of the Vedant and of the two chapters of the Veds, I beg to be allowed to express the disappointment I have felt, in receiving from a learned Brahman controversial remarks on Hindoo Theology, written in a foreign language, as it is the invariable practice of the natives of all provinces of Hindoostan to hold their discussions on such subjects in Sunskrit, which is the learned language common to all of them, and in which they may naturally be expected to convey their ideas with perfect correctness and greater facility than in any foreign tongue : nor need it be alleged that, by adopting this established channel of controversy, the opportunity of appealing to public opinion on the subject must be lost, as a subsequent translation from the Sunskrit into English may sufficiently serve that purpose. The irregularity of this mode of proceeding, however, gives me room to suspect that the letter in question is the production of the pen of an English gentleman, whose liberality, *I suppose*, has induced him to attempt an apology, even for the absurd idolatry of his fellow-creatures. If this inference be correct, while I congratulate that

\* This was published in reply to a letter which appeared in the Madras Courier in December 1816, under the signature of Sankara Sastri, in answer to Raja Ram Mohun Roy's Abridgment of the Vedant, his Preface to the translation of the Ishopanishad and his Introduction to the Cenopanishad.—ED.

gentleman on his progress in a knowledge of the sublime doctrines of the Vedant, I must, at the same time, take the liberty of entreating that he will, for the future, prefer consulting the original works written upon those doctrines, to relying on the second-hand information on the subject, that may be offered him by any person whatsoever.

The learned gentleman commences by objecting to the terms *discoverer* and *reformer*, in which the Editor of the Calcutta Gazette was pleased to make mention of me. He states, "that "people of limited understanding, not being able to comprehend "the system of worshipping the invisible Being, have adopted "false doctrines, and by that means confounded weak minds in "remote times ; but due punishment was inflicted on those here- "tics, and religion was very well established throughout India "by the Reverend Sankaracharya and his disciples, who, how- "ever, did not pretend to *reform* or *discover* them, or assume the "title of a *reformer* or *discoverer*." In none of my writings, nor in any verbal discussion, have I ever pretended to reform or to discover the doctrines of the unity of God, nor have I ever assumed the title of reformer or discoverer ; so far from such an assumption, I have urged in every work that I have hitherto published, that the doctrines of the unity of God are real Hindooism, as that religion was practised by our ancestors, and as it is well known even at the present age to many learned Brahmins : I beg to repeat a few of the passages to which I allude.

In the introduction to the abridgment of the Vedant I have said : "In order, therefore, to vindicate my own faith and that "of *our forefathers*, I have been endeavouring, for some time "past, to convince my countrymen of the *true meaning of our* "sacred books, and prove that my aberration deserves not the "opprobrium, which some unreflecting persons have been so ready to throw upon me." In another place of the same introduction : "The present is an endeavour to render an abridgment "of the same (the Vedant) into English, by which I expect to "prove to my European friends, that the superstitious practices

“which deform the Hindoo religion, have nothing to do with the pure spirit of its dictates.” In the introduction of the Cenopanishad : “This work will, I trust, by explaining to my countrymen *the real spirit of the Hindoo scriptures, which is but the declaration of the unity of God*, tend in a great degree to correct the erroneous conceptions which have prevailed with regard to the doctrines they inculcate ;” and in the Preface of the Ishopanishad : “*many learned Brahmins are perfectly aware of the absurdity of idol worship, and are well informed of the nature of the pure mode of divine worship.*” A reconsideration of these passages will, I hope, convince the learned gentleman, that I never advanced any claim to the title either of a reformer, or of a discoverer of the doctrines of the unity of the Godhead. It is not at all impossible that from the perusal of the translations above alluded to, the Editor of the Calcutta Gazette, finding the system of idolatry into which Hindoos are now completely sunk, quite inconsistent with the real spirit of their scriptures, may have imagined that their contents had become entirely forgotten and unknown ; and that I was the first to point out the absurdity of idol worship, and to inculcate the propriety of the pure divine worship, ordained by their Vedas, their Smritis, and their Poorans. From this idea, and from finding in his intercourse with other Hindoos, that I was stigmatized by many, however unjustly, as an *innovator*, he may have been, not unnaturally, misled to apply to me the epithets of discoverer and reformer.

2dly. The learned gentleman states : “There are an immense number of books, namely, *Vedas*, Sastras, Poorans, Agams, Tantras, Sutras, and Itihas, besides numerous commentaries, compiled by many famous theologians, both of ancient and modern times, respecting the doctrines of the worship of the invisible Being. They are not only written in Sanskrit, but rendered into the Pracrita, Teluga, Tamol, Gujrati, Hindoostani, Marhutta, and Canari languages, and immorally studied by a great part of the Hindu nation, attached to

the adwaitum faith, &c.” This statement of the learned gentleman, as far as it is correct, corroborates indeed my assertion with respect to the doctrines of the worship of the invisible Supreme Spirit being unanimously inculcated by all the Hindoo Sastras, and naturally leads to severe reflections on the selfishness which must actuate those Braminical teachers who, notwithstanding the unanimous authority of the Sastras for the adoption of pure worship, yet, with the view of maintaining the title of God which they arrogate to themselves, and of deriving pecuniary and other advantages from the numerous rites and festivals of idol worship, constantly advance and encourage idolatry to the utmost of their power. I must remark, however, that there is no translation of the Veds into any of the modern languages of Hindoostan with which I am acquainted, and it is for that reason that I have translated into Bengali the Vedant, the Cenopanishad of the Sam Ved, Ishopanishad of the Yajur Ved, &c., with the contents of which none but the learned among my countrymen were at all acquainted.

3dly. The learned gentleman states, that the translations of the scripture into the vulgar language are rejected by some people ; and he assigns as reasons for their so doing, that “if the reader “of them doubts the truth of the principles explained in the “translation, the divine knowledge he acquired by them becomes “a doubtful faith, and that doubt cannot be removed unless he “compare them with the original work : in that case, the knowledge he lastly acquired becomes superior, and his study, in the “first instance, becomes useless, and the cause of repeating the “same work.” When a translation of a work written in a foreign tongue is made by a person at all acquainted with that language into his native tongue, and the same translation is sanctioned and approved of by many natives of the same country, who are perfectly conversant with that foreign language, the translation, I presume, may be received with confidence, as a satisfactory interpretation of the original work, both by the vulgar and by men of literature.

It must not be supposed, however, that I am inclined to assert that there is not the least room to doubt the accuracy of such a translation ; because the meaning of authors, even in the original works, is very frequently dubious, especially in a language like Sanskrit, every sentence of which, almost, admits of being explained in different senses. But should the possibility of errors in every translation be admitted as reason for withholding all confidence in their contents, such a rule would shake our belief, not only in the principles explained in the translation of the Vedant into the current language, but also in all information respecting foreign history and theology obtained by means of translations : in that case, we must either learn all the languages that are spoken by the different nations in the world, to acquire a knowledge of their histories and religions, or be content to know nothing of any country besides our own. The second reason which the learned gentleman assigns for their objection to the translation is, that "Reading the scripture in the vulgar languages is prohibited by the Poorans." I have not yet met with any texts of any Poorans which prohibit the explanation of the scriptures in the vulgar tongue ; on the contrary, the Poorans allow that practice very frequently. I repeat one of these declarations from the Shiva Dhurma, quoted by the great Bughnund. "He who can interpret, according to the ratio of "the understanding of his pupils, through Sanskrit, or through "the vulgar languages, or by means of the current language "of the country, is entitled, spiritual father." Moreover, in every part of Hindoostan all professors of the Sanskrit language instructing beginners in the Veds, Poorans, and in other Sastras, interpret them in the vulgar languages ; especially spiritual fathers in exposition of those parts of the Veds and Poorans, which allegorically introduce a plurality of gods and idol-worship, doctrines which tend so much to their own worldly advantage.

The learned gentleman states, that "The first of the Ved "prescribes the mode of performing *yagam* or sacrifice, bestow-



“ing *danum* or alms ; treats of penance, fasting, and of worship-  
 “ping the incarnations, in which the Supreme Deity has appear-  
 “ed on the earth for divine purposes. The ceremonies perform-  
 “ed according to these modes, forsaking their fruits, are affirmed  
 “by the Vedas to be mental exercises and mental purifications  
 “necessary to obtain the knowledge of the divine nature.” I,  
 in common with the Veds and the Vedant, and Munoo (the first  
 and best of Hindoo lawgivers) as well as with the most celebrated  
 Sancharacharya, deny these ceremonies being necessary to ob-  
 tain the knowledge of the divine nature, as the Vedant positive-  
 ly declares, in text 36, sec. 4th, chap. 3rd : “Man may acquire  
 “the true knowledge of God, even without observing the rules  
 “and rites prescribed by the Ved for each class : as it is found  
 “in the Ved that many persons who neglected the performance  
 “of the rites and ceremonies, owing to their perpetual attention  
 “to the adoration of the Supreme Being, acquired the true know-  
 “ledge respecting the Supreme Spirit.” The Ved says : “Many  
 “learned true believers never worshipped fire, or any celestial  
 “gods through fire.” And also the Vedant asserts, in the 1st  
 text of 3rd sec. of the 3rd, chap. : “The worship authorized by  
 “all the Veds is one, as the directions for the worship of the only  
 “Supreme Being are invariably found in the Ved, and the epi-  
 “thets of the Supreme and Omnipresent Being, &c. commonly  
 “imply God alone.” Munoo, as I have elsewhere quoted, thus  
 declares on the same point, chap. 12th, text 92nd : “Thus must  
 “the chief of the twice born, though he neglect the ceremonial  
 “rites mentioned in the Sastra, be diligent in attaining a know-  
 “ledge of God, in controlling his organs of sense, and in repeat-  
 “ing the Ved.” Again, chapter 4th, text 23rd : “Some constant-  
 “ly sacrifice their breath in their speech, *when they instruct others*  
 “*of God aloud*, and their speech in their breath, *when they medi-*  
 “*tate in silence* ; perceiving in their speech and breath thus em-  
 “ployed, the imperishable fruit of a sacrificial offering.” 24th :  
 “Other Brahmans incessantly perform those sacrifices only,  
 “seeing with the eye of divine learning, that the scriptural know-

“ledge is the root of every ceremonial observance.” And also the same author declares in the chap. 2nd, text 84 : “All rites ordained in the Ved, oblations to fire and solemn sacrifices, pass away ; but that which passes not away is declared to be the syllable Om, thence called Acshora since it is a symbol of God, the Lord of created beings.”

5thly. The learned gentleman states, that “the difficulty of attaining a knowledge of the Invisible and Almighty Spirit is evident from the preceding verses.” I agree with him in that point ; that the attainment of perfect knowledge of the nature of the Godhead is certainly difficult, or rather impossible ; but to read the existence of the Almighty Being in his works of nature, is not, I will dare to say, so difficult to the mind of a man possessed of common sense, and unfettered by prejudice, as to conceive artificial images to be possessed, at once, of the opposite natures of human and divine beings, which idolaters constantly ascribe to their idols, strangely believing that things so *constructed* can be converted by ceremonies into *constructors* of the universe.

6thly. The learned gentleman objects to our introducing songs, although expressing only the peculiar tenets of monotheism, and says :

“But the holding of meetings, playing music, singing songs, and dancing, which are ranked among carnal pleasures, are not ordained by scripture as mental purification.” The practice of dancing in divine worship, I agree, is not ordained by the scripture, and accordingly never was introduced in our worship ; any mention of dancing in the Calcutta Gazette\* must, there-

\* The statement in the Calcutta Gazette, quoted by Sankar Sastri, was as follows :—“We understand that on all the great Hindoo festivals the *Friendly Society*,† established by him, holds meetings, not only with the view that its members may keep aloof from the idolatrous ceremonies of their countrymen, but also to renew and strengthen their own faith in the purer doctrines which they affirm to be established in the Veds.

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† The well known *Atmia sabha*.—ED.

fore, have proceeded from misinformation of the Editor. But respecting the propriety of introducing monotheistical songs in the divine worship, I beg leave to refer the gentleman to the text 114th and 115th of the 3rd chapter of Yajnyavalka, who authorizes not only scriptural music in divine contemplation, but also the songs that are composed by the vulgar. It is also evident that any interesting idea is calculated to make more impression upon the mind, when conveyed in musical verses, than when delivered in the form of common conversation.

7thly. The learned gentleman says : "All the Brahmins in this peninsula are studying the same Vedam as are read in the other parts of the country ; but I do not recollect to have read or heard of one treating on astronomy, medicine, or arms : the first is indeed an angam of the Vedam, but the two latter are taught in separate Sastras." In answer to which I beg to be allowed to refer the gentleman to the following text of the Nirvan : "The Veds, while talking of planets, botany, austere duties, arms, rites, natural consequences, and several other subjects, are purified by the inculcation of the doctrines of the Supreme Spirit." And also to the latter end of the Mahanirvana agam.

From the perusal of these texts, I trust, he will be convinced that Veds not only treat of astronomy, medicine, and arms, but also of morality and natural philosophy, and that all arts and sciences that are treated of in other Sastras, were originally introduced by the Veds : see also Munoo, chapter 12, verses 97 and 98. I cannot of course be expected to be answerable for Brahmans neglecting entirely the study of the scientific parts of the Ved, and putting in practice, and promulgating to the utmost of their power, that part of them which, treating of rites and festivals, is justly considered as the source of their worldly advantages and support of their alleged divinity.

"At these meetings they have music and dancing, as well as their more superstitious brethren ; but the songs are all expressive of the peculiar tenets of the Monotheists."—Ed.

8thly. I observe, that on the following statement in my Introduction to the Cenopunishud, *viz.*, "Should this explanation given by the Ved itself, as well as by its celebrated commentators Vyas, not be allowed to reconcile these passages which are seemingly at variance with each other, as those that declare the unity of the invisible Supreme Being, with others which describe a plurality of independent visible gods, the whole work must, I am afraid, not only be stripped of its authority, but looked upon as altogether unintelligible," the learned gentleman has remarked that "To say the least of this passage, RAM MOHUN ROY appears quite as willing to abandon as to defend the Scripture of his Religion."

In the foregoing paragraph, however, I did no more than logically confine the case to two points, *viz.*, that the explanation of the Ved and of its commentators must either be admitted as sufficiently reconciling the apparent contradictions between different passages of the Ved, or must not be admitted. In the latter case, the Ved must necessarily be supposed to be inconsistent with itself, and therefore altogether unintelligible, which is directly contrary to the faith of Hindoos of every description; consequently they must admit that those explanations do sufficiently reconcile the seeming contradictions between the chapters of the Veds.

9thly. The learned gentleman says that "Their (the attributes and incarnations) worship under various representations, by means of consecrated objects, is prescribed by the scripture to the human race, by way of mental exercises," &c. I cannot admit that the worship of these attributes under various representations, by means of consecrated objects, has been prescribed by the Ved to the HUMAN RACE; as this kind of worship of consecrated objects is enjoined by the Sastra to those only who are incapable of raising their minds to the notion of an invisible Supreme Being. I have quoted several authorities for this assertion in my Preface to the Ishopanishad, and beg to repeat here one or two of them: "The vulgar look for their God in water; men of more extended knowledge in celestial bodies; the ignor-

"ant in wood, bricks, and stones ; but learned men in the universal soul." "Thus corresponding to the nature of different powers or qualities, numerous figures have been invented for the benefit of those *who are not possessed of sufficient understanding.*" Permit me in this instance to ask, whether every Mussulman in Turkey and Arabia, from the highest to the lowest, every Protestant Christian at least of Europe, and many followers of Cabeer and Nanuck, do worship God without the assistance of consecrated objects? If so, how can we suppose that the human race is not capable of adoring the Supreme Being without the puerile practice of having recourse to visible objects?

10thly. The learned gentleman is of opinion that the attributes of God exist distinctly from God, and he compares the relation between God and these attributes to that of a king to his ministers, as he says : "If a person be desirous to visit an earthly prince, he ought to be introduced in the first instance by his ministers," &c. ; and "in like manner the Grace of God ought to be obtained by the grace through the worship of his attributes." This opinion, I am extremely sorry to find, is directly contrary to all the Vedant doctrines interpreted to us by the most revered Sankaracharya, which are real adwaita or non-duality; they affirm that God has no second that may be possessed of eternal existence, either of the same nature with himself or of a different nature from him, nor any second of that nature that might be called either his part or his *quality*. The 16th text of the 2nd section of 3rd chap: "The Ved has declared the Supreme Being to be mere understanding." The Ved says; "God is real existence, wisdom and eternity." The Ved very often calls the Supreme Existence by the epithets of Existent, Wise, and Eternal ; and assigns as the reason for adopting such epithets, that the Ved in the first instance speaks of God according to human idea, which views quality separately from person, in order to facilitate our comprehension of objects. In case these attributes should be supposed, as the learned gentleman asserts, to be separate existences, it necessarily follows, that they must be either eternal or

non-eternal. The former case, *viz.* the existence of a plurality of beings imbued like God himself with the property of eternal duration, strikes immediately at the root of all the doctrines relative to the unity of the Supreme Being contained in the Vedant. By the latter sentiment, namely, that the power and attributes of God are not eternal, we are led at once into the belief that the nature of God is susceptible of change, and consequently that He is not eternal, which makes no inconsiderable step towards atheism itself. These are the obvious and dangerous consequences, resulting from the learned gentleman's doctrine, that the attributes of the Supreme Being are distinct existences. I am quite at a loss to know how these attributes of the pure and perfect Supreme Being (as the learned gentleman declares them to exist really and separately, and not fictitiously and allegorically,) can be so sensual and destitute of morality, as the creating attribute or Brahma is said to be, by the Poorans, which represent him in one instance as attempting to commit a rape upon his own daughter. The protecting attribute, or Vishnu, is in another place affirmed to have fraudulently violated the chastity of Brinda, in order to kill her husband. Shiva, the destroying attribute, is said to have had a criminal attachment to Mohini, disregarding all ideas of decency. And a thousand similar examples must be familiar to every reader of the Poorans. I should be obliged by the learned gentleman's showing how the contemplation of such circumstances, which are constantly related by the worshippers of these attributes, even in their sermons, can be instrumental towards the purification of the mind, conducive to morality, and productive of eternal beatitude. Besides, though the learned gentleman in this instance considers these attributes to be separate existences, yet in another place he seems to view them as parts of the Supreme Being, as he says: "If one part of the ocean be adored, the ocean is adored." I am somewhat at a loss to understand how the learned gentleman proposes to reconcile this apparent contradiction. I must observe, however, in this place, that the comparison drawn between the rela-

tion of God and those attributes, and that of a king and his ministers, is totally inconsistent with the faith entertained by Hindoos of the present day; who, so far from considering these objects of worship as mere instruments by which they may arrive at the power of contemplating the God of Nature, regard them in the light of independent gods, to each of whom, however absurdly, they attribute almighty power, and a claim to worship, solely on his own account.

11thly. The learned gentleman is dissatisfied with the objection mentioned in my translation to worshipping these fictitious representations, and remarks, that "the objections to worshipping the attributes are not satisfactorily stated by the author." I consequently repeat the following authorities, which I hope may answer my purpose. The following are the declarations of the Ved: "He, who worships any god excepting the Supreme Being, and thinks that he himself is distinct and inferior to that God, knows nothing, and is considered as a domestic beast of these gods." "A state even so high as that of Brahma does not afford real bliss." "Adore God alone." "None but the Supreme Being is to be worshipped; nothing excepting him should be adored by a wise man." I repeat also the following texts of the Vedant: "The declaration of the Ved, that those that worship the celestial gods are the food of such gods, is an allegorical expression, and only means, that they are comforts to the celestial gods as food to mankind; for he who has no faith in the Supreme Being is rendered subject to these gods. The Ved affirms the same."

And the revered Sankaracharjya has frequently declared the state of celestial gods to be that of demons, in the Bhasya of the Ishopanishad and of others.

To these authorities a thousand others might be added. But should the learned gentleman require some practical grounds for objecting to the idolatrous worship of the Hindoos, I can be at no loss to give him numberless instances, where the ceremonies that have been instituted under the pretext of honouring the all-perfect Author of Nature, are of a

tendency utterly subversive of every moral principle.

I begin with Krishna as the most adored of the incarnations, the number of whose devotees is exceedingly great. His worship is made to consist in the institution of his image or picture, accompanied by one or more females, and in the contemplation of his history and behaviour, such as his perpetration of murder upon a female of the name of Pootna ; his compelling great number of married and unmarried women to stand before him denuded ; his debauching them and several others, to the mortal affliction of their husbands and relations ; his annoying them, by violating the laws of cleanliness and other facts of the same nature. The grossness of his worship does not find a limit here. His devotees very often personify (in the same manner as European actors upon stages do) him and his female companions, dancing with indecent gestures, and singing songs relative to his love and debaucheries. It is impossible to explain in language fit to meet the public eye, the mode in which Muhadeva, or the destroying attribute, is worshipped by the generality of the Hindoos : suffice it to say, that it is altogether congenial with the indecent nature of the image, under whose form he is most commonly adored.

The stories respecting him, which are read by his devotees in the Tuntras, are of a nature that, if told of any man, would be offensive to the ears of the most abandoned of either sex. In the worship of Kali, human sacrifices, the use of wine, criminal intercourse, and licentious songs, are included : the first of these practices has become generally extinct ; but it is believed that there are parts of the country where human victims are still offered.

Debauchery, however, universally forms the principal part of the worship of her followers. Nigam and other Tantras may satisfy every reader of the horrible tenets of the worshippers of the two latter deities. The modes of worship of almost all the inferior deities are pretty much the same. Having so far explained the nature of worship adopted by Hindoos in general, for the propitiation of their allegorical attributes, in direct



opposition to the mode of pure divine worship inculcated by the Veds, I cannot but entertain a strong hope that the learned gentleman, who ranks even monotheistical songs among carnal pleasures, and consequently rejects their admittance in worship, will no longer stand forward as an advocate for the worship of separate and independent attributes and incarnations.

12thly. The learned gentleman says, "that the Saviour," meaning Christ, "should be considered a personification of the "mercy and kindness of God (I mean actual not allegorical "personification)." From the little knowledge I had acquired of the tenets of Christians and those of anti-Christians, I thought there were only three prevailing opinions respecting the nature of Christ *viz.*, that he was considered by some as the expounder of the laws of God, and the mediator between God and man ; by many to be one of the three mysterious persons of the Godhead ; whilst others, such as the Jews, say that he was a mere man. But to consider Christ as a personification of the mercy of God is, if I mistake not, a new doctrine in Christianity, the discussion of which, however, has no connexion with the present subject. I, however, must observe that this opinion which the learned gentleman has formed of Christ being a personification of the mercy of God, is similar to that entertained by Mussulmans, for a period of upwards of a thousand years, respecting Mohummud, whom they call mercy of God upon all his creatures. The learned gentleman in the conclusion of his observations has left, as he says, the doctrines of pure allegory to me. It would have been more consistent with justice had he left pure allegory also to the Veds, which declare, "appellations and figures of all kinds are innovations," and which have allegorically represented God in the figure of the universe: "Fire is his head, the sun and the moon are his two eyes," &c.; and which have also represented all human internal qualities by different earthly objects; and also to Vyas, who has strictly followed the Veds in these figurative representations, and to Sankaracharjya, who also adopted the mode of allegory, in his Bhashya of the Vedant and of the Upanishadas.

A  
SECOND DEFENCE  
OF  
THE MONOTHEISTICAL SYSTEM  
OF  
THE VEDS;  
IN REPLY TO  
AN APOLOGY FOR THE PRESENT STATE  
OF  
HINDOO WORSHIP.

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CALUTTA :

1817.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

Two publications only have yet appeared with the professed object of defending Hindoo idolatry against the arguments which I have adduced from the Vedant, and other sacred authorities, in proof of the erroneousness of that system. To the first, which appeared in a Madras Journal, my reply has been for some time before the public. The second, which is the object of the present answer, and is supposed to be the production of a learned Brahmun now residing in Calcutta, was printed both in Bengali and in English ; and I have therefore been under the necessity of preparing a reply in both of those languages. That which was intended for the perusal of my countrymen, issued from the press a few weeks ago. For my European readers I have thought it advisable to make some additional remarks to those contained in the Bengali publication, which I hope will tend to make my arguments more clear and intelligible to them than a bare translation would do.



A  
•  
SECOND DEFENCE,

&c. &c.

THE learned Brahmun, in his defence of idolatry, thus begins :  
 “ Let it not be supposed that the following treatise has been  
 “ written with a view to refute the doctrines of those assuming  
 “ inventors and self-interested moderns,” &c. “ It is solely with  
 “ the intention of expressing the true meaning of these authori-  
 “ ties that this brief treatise has been composed ;” and he thus  
 concludes\* : “ The Vedant chundrica, or lunar light of the Vedant,  
 “ has thus been made apparent, and thus the glowworm’s light  
 “ has been eclipsed.” It is very much to be feared that, from  
 the perusal of this treatise, called the lunar light of the Vedant,  
 but filled up with\* satirical fables,† abusive expressions, and  
 contradictory assertions, sometimes admitting monotheism, but  
 at the same time blending with it and defending polytheism,‡  
 those foreign gentlemen, as well as those natives of this coun-  
 try who are not acquainted with the real tenets of the Vedant,  
 might on a superficial view form a very unfavourable opinion of  
 that theology, which, however, treats with perfect consistency of  
 the unity and universality of the Supreme Being, and forbids,  
 positively, treating with contempt or behaving ill towards any  
 creature whatsoever.

As to the satire§ and abuse, neither my education permits  
 any return by means of similar language, nor does the system

\* P. 1, l. 26 ; p. 2, l. 17 ; p. 19 and 20, margin.

† P. 1 ; p. 3, l. 9 ; p. 8. l. 17 ; p. 38, l. 14 ; p. 48, l. 19, &c. &c.

‡ P. 13, l. 14.

§ Vide the “Apology,” passim.

of my religion admit even a desire of unbecoming retaliation : situated as I am, I must bear them tranquilly.

Besides, a sect of people who are apt to make use of the most foul language, when they feel angry with their supposed deities,\* cannot of course be expected, when irritated with contradiction, to pay due attention, unless checked by fear, to the propriety of the use of decent expressions, either in common conversation or in religious controversy.

The total sum of the arguments, set forth as far as page 13, of the translation of this treatise (however inconsistent they are with each other), seems intended to prove that faith in the Supreme Being, when united with moral works, leads men to eternal happiness.

This doctrine, I am happy to observe, strongly corroborates every assertion that I have made in my translation, a few paragraphs of which I beg leave to repeat here for the satisfaction of my readers. In the abridgment of the Vedant, page 16 : "The Vedant shews that moral principle is a part of the adoration of God, *viz.* a command over passions and over the external senses of the body, and good acts are declared by the Ved "to be indispensable in the mind's approximation to God ; they "should therefore be strictly taken care of, and attended to both "previously and subsequently to such approximation to the "Supreme Being ; that is to say, we should not indulge our evil "propensities, but should endeavour to have entire control over "them : reliance on, and self-resignation to the only true Being, "with an aversion to worldly considerations, are included in the "good acts above alluded to." In the introduction to the Ishopanishad (page 87) : "Under these impressions, therefore, I have "been impelled to lay before them genuine translations of parts "of their scriptures, which inculcate not only the enlightened

\* As may be observed when at the annual festival of Juggunnath, the car in which he is conveyed happens to be impeded in its progress by any unseen obstacle. In this case, the difficulty is supposed to be occasioned by the malicious opposition of that god, on whom the most gross abuse is liberally bestowed by his devotees.

“worship of One God, but the purest principles of morality.” But the learned Brahmun asserts, in two instances, among arguments above noticed, that the worship of a favoured deity and that of an image are also considered to be acts of morality. The absurdity of this assertion will be shown afterwards, in considering the subjects of idol-worship. To English readers, however, it may be proper to remark, that the Sanskrit word which signifies *works*, is not to be understood in the same sense as that which it implies in Christian theology, when works are opposed to faith. Christians understand by works, actions of *moral merit*, whereas Hindoos use the term in their theology only to denote religious rites and ceremonies prescribed by Hindoo lawgivers, which are often irreconcilable with the commonly received maxims of moral duty ; as, for instance, the crime of suicide prescribed to widows by Ungeera, and to pilgrims at holy places by the Narsingh and Koorma Poorans. I do not, therefore, admit that works, taken in the latter sense (that is, the different religious acts prescribed by the Sastra to the different classes of Hindoos respectively) are necessary to attain divine faith, or that they are indispensable accompaniments of holy knowledge ; for the Vedant in the chapter 3rd, section 4th, text 37th, positively declares that the true knowledge of God may be acquired without observing the rules and rites prescribed by the Sastra to each class of Hindoos ; and also, examples are frequently found in the Ved, of persons, who, though they neglected the performance of religious rites and ceremonies, attained divine knowledge and absorption by control over their passions and senses, and by contemplation of the Ruler of the universe. Munoo, the first and chief of all Hindoo lawgivers, confirms the same doctrines in describing the duties of laymen, in the texts 22nd, 23rd, and 24th of the 4th chapter of his work ; and in the Bhashya, or commentaries on the Ishopanishad, and on the other Upanishads of the Veds, the illustrious Sankaracharya declared the attainment of faith in God, and the adoration of the Supreme Being, to be entirely independent of Brahminical ceremonies ; and the



Ved affirms that "many learned true believers never worshipped "fire, nor any celestial god through fire." The learned Brahmun, although he has acknowledged himself, in p. 9th, line 6th, of his treatise, that, "in the opinion of Sankaracharjya the "attainment of absorption does not depend on works of merit" (or, properly speaking, on religious rites), yet forgetting the obedience he has expressed to be due to the instruction\* of that celebrated commentator, has immediately contradicted his opinion, when he says in p. 9, l. 9: "It has also been ascertained "that acts of merit (Brahminical rites) must be performed previously to the attainment of divine knowledge;" for, if divine knowledge were to be dependent on the observance of Brahminical rites, and absorption dependent on divine knowledge, it would follow necessarily that absorption would depend on Brahminical rites, which is directly contrary to the opinion of the commentator quoted by the learned Brahmun himself.

Moreover, the learned Brahmun at first states (p. 11, l. 12) that, "in the ancient writers we read that a knowledge of "Brahma or holy knowledge, is independent of acts" (religious rites); but he again contradicts this statement, and endeavours to explain it away (p. 11, l. 24): "Thus when the Sastras state "that absorption may be attained even though the sacrificial "fires be neglected, the praise of that holy knowledge is intended, "but *not* the depreciation of meritorious acts" (Brahminical rites). Here he chooses to accuse his scripture, and ancient holy writers, of exaggerated and extravagant praise of holy knowledge, rather than that the least shock should be given by their authority to the structure of paganism and idolatry. From this instance, the public may perceive how zealous the learned Brahmun and his brethren are, in respect to the preservation of their fertile estate of idolatry, when they are willing to sacrifice to it even their own scriptural authorities.

Upon a full perusal of the treatise, it appears that the arguments employed by the learned Brahmun have no other object

than to support the weak system of idol-worship, inasmuch as he repeatedly declares, that the adoration of 330,000,000 deities, especially the principal ones, such as Siva, Vishnoo, .Kali, Gunesh, the Sun and others,\*through their several images, has been enjoined by the Sastras, and sanctioned by custom. I am not a little surprised to observe, that after having perused my Preface to the Ishopanishad in Bengali (of which during the last twelve months I have distributed nerely five hundred copies amongst all descriptions of Hindoos), the learned Brahmun has offered no objection to what I have therein asserted, relative to the reason assigned by the same Sastras, as well for the injunction to worship these figured beings, as for the general prevalence of idol-worship in this country.

In that work, I admitted that the worship of these deities was directed by the Sastra ; but, at the same time, I prove by their own authority, that this was merely a concession made to the limited faculties of the vulgar, with the view of remedying, in some decree, the misfortune of their being incapable of comprehending and adopting the spiritual worship of the true God. Thus, in the aforesaid Preface, I remarked : “ For they (the “ Poorans, Tuntras, &c.) repeatedly declare God to be one, and “ above the apprehension of the external and internal senses. “ They indeed expressly declare the divinity of many gods, and “ the mode of their worship ; but they reconcile those contradict- “ ing assertions by affirming; frequently, that the directions to “ worship any celestial beings are only applicable to those who “ are incapable of elevating their minds to the idea of an invis- “ ble being.” And, with the view to remove every doubt as to the correctness of my assertion, I at the same time quoted the most unquestionable authorities, a few of which I shall here repeat. “ Thus corresponding to the natures of different powers “ and qualities, numerous figures have been invented for the “ benefit of those who are not possessed of sufficient understand- “ ing.” “ The vulgar look for their gods in water ; men of “ more extended knowledge, in celestial bodies ; the ignorant, in

“wood, bricks, and stones; but learned men in the universal soul.”  
 “It is impossible for those who consider pilgrimage as devotion,  
 “and believe that the divine nature exists in the image, to look  
 “up to, communicate with, to petition, and to serve true believers  
 “in God.”

Such indeed is the prevalent nature of truth, that when to dispute it is impossible, the learned Brahmun has not been always successful in concealing it, even when the admission is most fatal to his own argument. In p. 28, l. 34, he says: “But to those  
 “it is enjoined who, from a *defective understanding*, do not perceive that God exists in every thing, that they should worship  
 “him through the medium of some created object.” In making this acknowledgment, the learned Brahmun has confirmed the correctness of all my assertions; though the evident conclusion is, that he and all his followers must either immediately give up all pretensions to understanding, or forsake idolatry. “

In my former tract, I not only proved that the adoration of the Supreme Being in spirit was prescribed by the Ved to men of understanding, and the worship of the celestial bodies and their images to ignorant, but I also asserted, that the Ved actually prohibited the worship of any kind of figured beings by men of intellect and education. A few of the passages quoted by me in my former publications, on which this assertion rests, I also beg leave to repeat.

“He who worships any God except the Supreme Being, and  
 “thinks that he himself is distinct and inferior to that God, knows  
 “nothing, and is considered a domestic beast of these gods.”  
 “A state even so high as that of Brahmá, does not afford real  
 “bliss.” “Adore God alone. None but the Supreme Being is  
 “to be worshipped; nothing excepting him should be adored by  
 “a wise man.” I repeat also the following text of the Vedant:  
 “The declaration of the Ved, that those that worship the celestial  
 “gods are the food of such gods, is an allegorical expression, and  
 “only means that they are comforts to the celestial gods, as food  
 “to mankind; for he who has no faith in the Supreme Being, is

“rendered subject to these gods ; the Ved affirms the same.” No reply therefore is, I presume, required of me to the arguments adduced by the learned Brahmun in his treatise for idol-worship ; except that I should offer some additional authorities, confirming exclusively the rational worship of the true God, and prohibiting the worship of the celestial figures and their images. I beg leave accordingly to quote, in the first instance, a few texts of the Ved : “Men may acquire eternal beatitude, by obtaining a knowledge of the Supreme Being alone ; *there is no other way* to salvation.”\* “To those that acquire a knowledge of Him, the Ruler of the intellectual power, who is eternal amidst the perishable universe, and is the source of sensation among all animate existences, and who alone assigns to so many objects their respective purposes, everlasting beatitude is allotted ; but not to those who are not possessed of that knowledge.”† And in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th texts of the Cenopanishad, the Ved has, five times successively, denied the divinity of any specific being which men in general worship ; and has affirmed the divinity of that Being solely, who is beyond description and comprehension, and out of the reach of the power of vision, and of the sense of hearing or of smelling. The most celebrated Sankaracharjya, in his commentary upon these texts, states that, lest people should suppose Vishnoo, Muhadeva, Pavan, Indra, or any other, to be a supreme spirit, the Ved in this passage disavows positively the divinity of all of them. Again, the Ved says : “Those that neglect the contemplation of the Supreme Spirit, *either by devoting themselves solely to the performance of the ceremonies of religion, or by living destitute of religious ideas*, shall, after death, assume the state of demons, *such as that of the celestial gods, and of other created beings*, which are surrounded with the darkness of ignorance.”‡ It will not, I hope, be supposed inconsistent with the subject in question to mention in this place in what manner the Vedant treats of these celestial gods, and how the Ved classes them among the

\* Sooctu.

† Kut’h.

‡ Ishopanishad.

other beings. The Vedant (ch. 1st, s. 3rd, t. 26th) has the following passage : " Vyas affirms that it is prescribed also to celestial gods and heavenly beings to attain a knowledge of the Supreme Being, because a desire of absorption is *equally* possible for them." And the Ved, in the Moonduk Upanishad, thus declares : " From Him, who knows all things generally and particularly, and who only by his omniscience *created the universe*, Bruhmá, and whatever bears appellation, and figure as well as food, all are produced." " From Him (the Supreme Being) celestial gods\* of many descriptions, Siddha, or beings next to celestial gods, mankind, beasts, birds, life, wheat, and barley, all are produced." In the Devee Mahatmya, a work which is as much in circulation among the Hindoos as their daily prayer-book,† (ch. 1st, t. 66th) the creation of Vishnoo, Bruhmá, and Muhadeva, is most distinctly affirmed.

Munoo, the best of all the commentators of the Veds, says (chap. 12th, text 85th): " Of all those duties, answered Bhrigoo, the principal is to acquire *from the Upanishad* a true knowledge of the one Supreme Spirit, that is, the most exalted of all sciences, because through that knowledge eternal beatitude is obtained." And the same author, in the conclusion of his work on rites and ceremonies, thus directs (t. 92nd, ch. 12th): " Thus must the chief of the twice-born, though he neglect the ceremonial rites mentioned in the Shastras, be diligent in attaining a knowledge of God, in controlling his organs of sense, and in repeating the Ved." In the Coolarnuva, " absorption is not to be effected by the studies of the Veds nor by the reading of other Shastras: absorption is effected by a true knowledge of the Supreme Being. O ! Parbutee, except that knowledge there is no other way to absorption." " Caste or religious order

\* The Ved, having in the first instance personified all the attributes and powers of the Deity, and also the celestial bodies and natural elements, does, in conformity to this idea of personification, treat of them in the subsequent passages as if they were real beings, ascribing to them birth, animation, senses, and accidents, as well as liability to annihilation.

“belonging to each sect,\* is not calculated to be the cause of eternal beatitude, nor is the study of Durshuns or any other Shastras, sufficient to produce absorption : a knowledge of the Supreme Spirit is alone the cause of eternal beatitude.” Mahanirvan : “He who believes that from the highest state of Bruhmá to the lowest state of a straw, all are delusions, and that the one Supreme Spirit is the only true being, attains beatitude.” “Those who believe that the divine nature exists in an image made of earth, stone, metal, wood, or of other materials, reap only distress by their austerities ; but they cannot, without a knowledge of the Supreme Spirit, acquire absorption.”

I am really sorry to observe that, notwithstanding these authorities and a thousand others of a similar nature, the learned Brahmun appears altogether unimpressed by the luminous manner in which they inculcate the sublime simple spiritual belief in, and worship of, one God, and that, on the contrary, he should manifest so much zeal in leading people into an idolatrous belief in the divinity of created and perishable beings.

Idolatry, as now practised by our countrymen, and which the learned Brahmun so zealously supports as conducive to morality, is not only rejected by the Shastras universally, but must also be looked upon with great horror by common sense, as leading directly to immorality and destructive of social comforts. For every Hindoo who devotes himself to this absurd worship, constructs for that purpose a couple of male and female idols, sometimes indecent in form, as representatives of his favourite deities ; he is taught and enjoined from his infancy to contemplate and repeat the history of these, as well as of their fellow deities, though the actions ascribed to them be only a continued series of debauchery, sensuality, falsehood, ingratitude, breach of trust, and treachery to friends.\* There can be but one opinion respecting the moral conduct to be expected of a person, who has been brought up with sentiments of reverence to such beings, who refreshes his memory relative to them almost every

\* Vide Note at the end.

day, and who has been persuaded to believe, that a repetition of the *holy name* of one of these deities,\* or a trifling present to his image or to his devotee, is sufficient, not only to purify and free him from all crimes whatsoever, but to procure to him future beatitude.

As to the custom or practice to which the learned Brahmun so often refers in defence of idolatry, I have already, I presume, explained in the Preface of the Ishopanishad, the accidental circumstances which have caused idol-worship to flourish throughout the greater part of India ; but, as the learned Brahmun has not condescended to notice any of my remarks on this subject, I beg leave to repeat here a part of them.

“ Many learned Brahmuns are perfectly aware of the absurdity of idolatry, and are well informed of the nature of the pure mode of divine worship ; but as in the rites, ceremonies, and festivals of idolatry they find the source of their comforts and fortune, they not only never fail to protect idol-worship from all attacks, but even advance and encourage it to the utmost of their power, by keeping the knowledge of their scriptures concealed from the rest of the people.” And again : “ It is, however, evident to every one possessed of common sense, that custom or fashion is quite different from divine faith ; the latter proceeding from spiritual authorities and correct reasoning, and the former being merely the fruit of vulgar caprice. What can justify a man, who believes in the inspiration of his religious books, in neglecting the direct authorities of the same works, and subjecting himself entirely to custom and fashion, which are liable to perpetual changes, and depend upon popular whim ? But it cannot be passed unnoticed, that those who practise idolatry, and defend it under the shield of custom, have been violating their customs almost every twenty years, for the sake of a little convenience, or to promote their worldly advantages.” Instances of this sort are mentioned in the Preface

of the Ishopanishad, and to those I beg leave to recal the attention of the learned Brahmun.

Every reader may observe, that the learned Brahmun in his treatise, written (as he says) on the doctrines of the Vedant, has generally neglected to quote any authority for his assertions; and when he cites the Ved or the Vedant (which he does sometimes) as his authority, he carefully omits to mention the text or part to which his assertion refers. The validity of theological controversy chiefly depends upon Scriptural authority, but when no authority is offered, the public may judge how far its credibility should extend. I shall, however, make a few remarks on the absurd and contradictory assertions with which the treatise abounds.

The learned Brahmun observes :\* “ But if the divine essence “itself, and not the energy be extolled, it will be adored under “the forms of Bruhmá, Vishnoo, and Indra, and other male deities.” And in other places, (p. 30, l. 27) : “ So by paying “adoration to any material object, animate or inanimate, the “Supreme Being himself is adored.” If the truth of the latter assertion be admitted (namely, that God himself is adored by the adoration of any thing whatsoever), no mark of distinction between the adoration of any visible objects and male deities will exist; and the former assertion respecting the adoration of the Supreme Being through the male deities only, will appear an absurd restriction.

The learned Brahmun states (p. 19, l. 31), that, “If you “believe on the authority of the Scriptures, that there is a “Supreme Being, can you not believe that he is united to “matter?” A belief in God is by no means connected with a belief of his being united to matter: for those that have faith in the existence of the Almighty, and are endued with common sense, scruple not to confess their ignorance as to his nature or mode of existence, in regard to the point of his relation to matter, or to the properties of matter. How, therefore, can a

\* P. 14, l. 14,



belief in God's being united to matter, be inferred as a necessary consequence of a belief in his existence? The learned Brahmun again contradicts himself on this point, saying (p. 38, l. 19): "The divine essence being supernatural and immaterial, a knowledge of it is to be acquired solely from revelations."

The learned Brahmun (in p. 18, l. 4): states that, "A quality cannot exist independently of its substance, but substance may exist independently of any quality." Every one possessed of sensation is convinced, that a substance is as much dependent on the possession of some quality or qualities for its existence, as a quality on some substance. It is impossible even to imagine a substance divested of qualities. Despoil it as much as you please, that of magnitude must still remain. I therefore trust that the public will not suppose the above stated doctrines of the learned Brahmun to have been derived from those of the Vedant.

It is again stated (p. 21, l. 4) that, "In point of fact, if you admit the existence of matter, as far as it regards yourself, with its twenty-four accidents, as confirmed by universal experience, you can easily conceive that the same properties belong to the Supreme Being." It is easy enough for the learned Brahmun to conceive that the twenty-four properties which are peculiar to animals, and among which all sources of carnal pleasures are included, belong to his supposed deities; but it is difficult, or rather impossible, for a man untainted with idolatrous principles, to ascribe to God all such properties as he allows to exist in himself.

The learned Brahmun has drawn an analogy between the operation of the charms of the Veds, and that of magic; whereon he says (p. 18, l. 1): "Cannot the charms of the Veds operate as powerfully as those of magic, in producing effects where the cause is not present?" If the foundation of the Veds is held not to be stronger, as the learned Brahmun seems to consider it, than that of magic, I am afraid it will be found to rest on so slender a footing, that its doctrines will hardly be worth discussion.

In p. 24, l. 10, the learned Brahmun states that "The Ved-  
 "ant itself, in treating of the several deities, declares them to be  
 "possessed of forms, and their actions and enjoyments are all de-  
 "pendent on their corporeal nature." But (p. 21, l. 19) he says :  
 "Because the male and female deities, whose beings I contend for,  
 "are nothing more than accidents existing in the Supreme Being."

He thus at one time considers these deities as possessed of a corporeal nature, and at another declares them to be mere accidents in God, which is quite inconsistent with the attribute of corporeality. I am really at a loss to understand, how the learned Brahmun could admit so dark a contradiction into his "*Lunar light of the Vedant.*"

The learned Brahmun (in p. 27, l. 6) thus assimilates the worship of the Supreme Being to that of an earthly king, saying "Let us drop the discourse concerning a Supreme and Invisible Being." Take an earthly king. It is evident that, to serve him, "there must be the medium of materiality. Can service to him "be accomplished otherwise than by attendance on his person, "praising his qualities, or some similar method?" Those who believe God to be an almighty, omniscient, and independent existence, which, pervading the universe, is deficient in nothing ; and also know the feeble and dependent nature of earthly kings, as liable to sudden ruin, as harassed by incessant cares and wants, ought never, I presume, to assimilate the contemplation of the Almighty power with any corporeal service acceptable to an earthly king. But as by means of this analogy, the learned Brahmun and his brethren have successfully persuaded their followers to make in imitation of presents and bribes offered to princes, pecuniary vows to these supposed deities, to which it would seem none but the learned Brahmun and his brethren have exclusive claim, —and as such analogy has thus become the source of their comforts and livelihood, I shall say no more upon so tender a subject.

He further observes (in p. 22, l. 27) : "In reverting to the "subject, you affirm, that you admit the existence of matter in "human beings, because it is evident to your senses ; but deny

“it with respect to God, because it is not evident to your senses,” &c.; and, “If this be your method of reasoning, it would appear that your faith is confined to those objects only which are evident to your senses.” As far as my recollection goes with respect to the contents of my publications, both in the native language and in English, I believe I never denied the materiality of God, on the mere ground of its not being evident to our senses. The assertion which I quoted, or made use of in my former treatises, is, that the nature of the God-head is beyond the comprehension of external and internal senses;\* which, I presume, implies neither denial of the materiality of God, on the sole ground of his being invisible, nor the limitation of my faith merely to objects evident to the senses. For many things that far surpass the limits of our senses to perceive, or experience to teach, may yet be rendered credible, or even demonstrated by inferences drawn from our experience. Such as the mutual gravitation of the earth and moon towards each other, and of both to the sun; which facts cannot be perceived by any of our senses, but may be clearly demonstrated by reasoning drawn from our experience. Hence it appears, that a thing is justly denied, only, when found contrary to sense and reason, and not merely because it is not perceptible to the senses.

I have now to notice the friendly advice given me by the learned Brahmun (in p. 23, l. 16). “But at all the events, divest yourself of the uneasy sensations you profess to experience, at witnessing the worship paid to idols, prepared at the expense and labour of another.” In thanking him for his trouble in offering me this counsel, I must, however, beg the learned Brahmun to excuse me, while I acknowledge myself unable to follow it; and that for several reasons. 1st. A feeling for the misery and distress of his fellow creatures is, to every one not overpowered by selfish motives, I presume, rather natural than optional. 2ndly. I, as one of their countrymen, and ranked in

\* The Preface to the Ishopanishad, p. 2, l. 9; p. 3, l. 2. The Abridgement of the Vedant, p. 1 and 2. (See p. 74, 75, 7, of this edition.—ED.)

the most religious sect, of course participate in the disgrace and ridicule to which they have subjected themselves, in defiance of their scriptural authority, by the worship of idols, very often under the most shameful forms, accompanied with the foulest language, and most indecent hymns and gestures. 3rdly. A sense of the duty which one man owes to another, compels me to exert my utmost endeavours to rescue them from imposition and servitude, and promote their comfort and happiness.

He further observes (p.30, l.19); "In the like manner, the King of Kings is served equally by those worshippers who are acquainted with His real essence, and by those who only recognize Him under the forms of the deities; but in the future distribution of rewards a distinction will be made." As the learned Brahmun confesses, that the same reward is not promised to the worshippers of figured deities as to the adorers of the Supreme Being, it seems strange that he should persist in alleging that God is truly worshipped in the adoration of figured gods; for if the worship be in both cases the same, the reward bestowed by a just God must be the same to both; but the rewards are not the same to both, and therefore the worship of figured deities cannot be considered equal to the adoration of God.

In the same page (l. 7), he compares God to a mighty emperor, saying, "As a mighty emperor travels through his kingdom in the garb of a peasant, to effect the welfare of his subjects, so the King of Kings pervades the universe, assuming a divine, or even a human form, for the same benevolent purpose." This comparison seems extremely objectionable, and the inference from it totally inadmissible. For a king being ignorant of things out of the reach of his sight, and liable to be deceived respecting the secrets and private opinions of his subjects, may sometimes be obliged to travel through his kingdom, to acquire a knowledge of their condition, and to promote their welfare personally. But there can be obviously no inducement for an omnipotent being, in whose omniscience also the learned Brahmun, I dare say, believes, to assume a form in order

either to acquaint himself with the affairs of men, or to accomplish any benevolent design towards his creatures.

He again observes, that these figures and idols are representations of the true God, a sight of which serves, as he alleges, to bring that Being to his recollection (p. 30, l. 5): "They are as pictures, which recal to the memory a dear and absent friend, or like the worship of the moon, reflected in various waters."

This observation of the learned Brahmun, induces me to suppose that he must have formed a notion of Godhead quite strange and contemptible: for it is almost impossible for a man, who has a becoming idea of God's superiority to all creatures, to represent Him, as the Hindoos very often do, in a form so shameful, that a description of it is prohibited by common decency, or in a shape so ridiculous, as that piebald kite called Kshyemunkuree, and that of another bird called Neelkunth, or of jackals, &c. And it is equally difficult to believe that a rational being can make use of such objects to bring the All-perfect Almighty Power to his recollection.

He further says (p. 31, l. 32): "If any one assert that the case is otherwise, that the deities, mankind, the heavens, and other objects, have an existence independent of God, that faith in him is sufficient without worship, that they (the deities) cannot meet with reverence, how can that person affect to disbelieve the doctrine of independent existence, or assert that he is a believer in universality, or a follower of the Vedant?" To acquit myself from such gross but unfounded accusation as that of my believing material existence to be independent of God, I repeat a few passages from the abridgment of the Vedant. (P. 6, l. 8): "Nothing bears true existence excepting God." Again in l. 9, "The existence of whatever thing that appears to us, relies on the existence of God." Besides, there is not, I am confident, a single assertion in the whole of my publications, from which the learned Brahmun might justly infer that I believed in the independent existence of deities, mankind, the heavens, or other objects. The public, by an examination of

these works, will be enabled to judge how far the learned Brahmun has ventured to brave public opinion, in the invention of arguments for the defence of idolatry.

He again says (p. 34, l. 28) : "If, by the practice of the prescribed forms in a church, a temple, or a mosque, God be worshipped, how can he be dishonoured by being worshipped under the form of an image, however manufactured?" Those who contemplate God in a church or mosque, or elevate their minds to a notion of the Almighty Power in any other appropriated place, for the sake of good example, never pay divine homage to those places ; but those that pretend to worship God under the form of an image, consider it to be possessed of divine nature, and at the same time, most inconsistently, as imbued with immoral principles. Moreover, the promoters of the worship of images, by promulgating anecdotes illustrative of the supposed divine power of particular idols, endeavour to excite the reverence of the people, and specially of pilgrims, who, under these superstitious ideas, are persuaded to propitiate them with large sacrifices of money, and sometimes even by that of their own lives. Having so far entered into this subject, the learned Brahmun will, I hope, be convinced of the impropriety of the analogy which he has drawn between a worship *within* a certain material object and a worship *of* a material object.

As to his question (p. 34, l. 32), "Is the sight of the image unpleasing?" My answer must be affirmative. It is extremely natural that, to a mind whose purity is not corrupted by a degrading superstition, the sight of images which are often of the most hideous or indecent description, and which must therefore excite disgust in the minds of the spectator, should be unpleasing. A visit to Kalighaut,\* or Burahnugur,† which are only distant four miles from Calcutta, will sufficiently convince the reader of the unpleasant nature of their beloved images. He again asks in the same page, (l. 33) : "Will a beloved friend

\* The temple of Kali.

† Where there are twelve temples dedicated to Siva.

“be treated with disrespect by being seated on a chair, when he arrives in your house, or by being presented with fragrant flowers and other offerings?” To which I shall say, no; but at the same time I must assert that a friend worthy of reverence would not, we may be sure, be at all pleased at being exhibited sometimes in a form,\* the bare mention of which would be considered as a gross insult to the decorous feelings of the public; and sometimes in the shape of a monkey,† fish,‡ hog,§ or elephant,|| or at being represented as destitute of every virtue, and altogether abandoned. Nor would he believe his host to be possessed of common sense, who, as a token of regard, would altogether neglect his guest, to go and lay fruits and flowers before his picture.

It is said (p. 39, l. 23): “In the accounts of ancient Greece we meet with the worship of idols, and the practice of austerities; but these acts have been condemned by the more enlightened moderns.” I am really glad to observe that the learned Brahmun, more liberally and plainly than could be expected, confesses that idolatry will be totally condemned as soon as the understanding is improved. I, however, beg leave to remark on this instance, that though the idolatry practised by the Greeks and Romans was certainly just as impure, absurd, and puerile as that of the present Hindoos, yet the former was by no means so destructive of the comforts of life, or injurious to the texture of society, as the latter. The present Hindoo idolatry being made to consist in following certain modes and restraints of diet (which according to the authorities of the Mahabharut and other histories were never observed by their forefathers), has subjected its unfortunate votaries to entire separation from the rest of the world, and also from each other, and to constant inconveniences and distress.

A Hindoo, for instance, who affects particular purity,¶ cannot

\* Under which Siva is adored. † Hunooman. ‡ The first incarnation of Vishnoo. § The third incarnation of Vishnoo. || Gunesch.

¶ A person of this description is distinguished by the name of Swayum-pak, one who is his own cook.

even partake of food dressed by his own brother, when invited to his house, and if touched by him while eating, he must throw away the remaining part of his meal. In fact, owing to the observance of such peculiar idolatry, directly contrary to the authorities of their scripture, they hardly deserve the name of social beings.

The learned Brahmun further says (p. 23, l. 3): "If you affirm that you are not an infidel, but that your arguments are in conformity with those of the philosophers who were ignorant of the Veds," &c. A remark of this kind cannot, I am sure, be considered as at all applicable to a person, who has subjected himself to this writer's remarks only by translating and publishing the principal parts of the Ved, and by vindicating the Vedant theology, and who never advanced on religious controversy any argument which was not founded upon the authorities of the Veds and their celebrated commentators. It is, however, remarkable that, although the learned Brahmun and his brethren frequently quote the name of the Veds and others Shastras, both in writing and in verbal discussion, they pay little or no attention in practice to their precepts, even in the points of the most important nature, a few of which I beg leave to notice here.

1st. The adoration of the invisible Supreme Being, although exclusively prescribed by the Upanishads, or the principal parts of the Veds, and also by the Vedant, has been totally neglected, and even discountenanced, by the learned Brahmun and his followers, the idol-worship, which those authorities permit only to the ignorant, having been substituted for that pure worship.

2ndly. Ungeera and Vishnool, and also the modern Rughoonundun, authorize a widow to burn herself voluntarily along with the corpse of her husband: but modern Brahmuns, in direct opposition to their authority, allow her relations to bind the mournful and infatuated widow to the funeral pile with ropes and bamboos, as soon as she has expressed a wish to perform the dreadful funeral sacrifice, to which the Brahmuns lend a ready assistance.

3rdly. Although an acceptance of money or of a present



in the marriage contract of a daughter is most strictly prohibited by the Veds and by Munoo (text 98 and 100 of chap. 9), yet the sale of female children under pretence of marriage is practised by nearly two-thirds of the Brahmuns of Bengal and Tirhoot, as well as by their followers generally.

4thly. Yagnyubulkya has authorized the second marriage of a man, while his former wife is living; but only under certain circumstances of misconduct or misfortune in the latter, such as the vice of drinking wine, of deception, of extravagance, of using disagreeable language, or shewing manifest dislike towards her husband, long protracted and incurable illness, barrenness, or producing only female offspring. In defiance, however, of this restraint, some of them marry thirty or forty women, either for the sake of money got with them at marriage, or to gratify brutal inclinations. Madhosingh, the late Rajah of Tirhoot, through compassion towards that helpless sex, limited, I am told, within these thirty or forty years, the Brahmuns of that district to four wives only. This regulation, although falling short both of the written law and of that of reason, tends to alleviate in some measure the misery to which women were before exposed, as well as to diminish in some degree domestic strife and disturbance.

5thly. According to the authority of Munoo (text 155, chap. 2nd), respect and distinction are due to a Brahmun, merely in proportion to his knowledge; but on the contrary amongst modern Hindoos, honour is paid exclusively to certain families of Brahmuns, such as the Koolins, &c. however void of knowledge and principle they may be. This departure from law and justice was made by the authority of a native prince of Bengal, named Bullalsen, within the last three or four hundred years. And this innovation may perhaps be considered as the chief source of that decay of learning and virtue, which, I am sorry to say, may be at present observed. For wherever respectability is confined to birth only, acquisition of knowledge, and the practice of morality, in that country, must rapidly decline.

The learned Brahmūn objects to the term *indescribable*, although universally assigned to the Supreme Being by the Ved, and by the Vedant theology, saying (p. 37, l. 20), "It is a wonderful interpretation of the Vedant to say that God is indescribable, although existing, unless indeed he be looked upon as the production of magic ; as existing in one sense, and non-existent in another." And again (l. 14), "He, therefore, who asserts that the Supreme Being is indescribable and at the same time existing, must conceive that He, like the world, is mutable," &c. In answer to which I beg to refer the learned Brahmūn to the 11th text of the 3rd Brahmūn of the 4th chapter of the Brihदारुण्यuku, the principal part of the Ujoor Ved, as commented upon by the celebrated Sunkaracharjya : "The Ved having so far described God, by various absolute\* and relative epithets,† was convinced of its incapability of giving a real description of the nature of the Godhead : language can convey a notion of things only either by the appellations by which they are already known, or by describing their figure, accidents, genus, and properties ; but God has none of these physical circumstances : the Ved therefore attempted to explain him in negative terms ;" (that is, by declaring that whatever thing may be perceived by the mental faculties, or the external senses, is not God.) "The Ved's ascribing to God attributes of eternity, wisdom, truth, &c., shews that it can explain him only by ascribing those attributes, and applying these epithets, that are held by man in the highest estimation, without intending to assert the adequacy of such description. He is the only true existence amidst all dependent existences, and the true source of our senses." Also in the text 3rd of the Cenopanishad : "Hence no vision can approach him ; no language can describe him ; no intellectual power can compass or determine him. We know nothing of how the Supreme Being should be explained : He is beyond nature, which is above comprehension :

\*As eternal, true, and intelligent.

† As creator, preserver, and destroyer.

“our anciet *spiritual parents* have thus explained Him to us.” It cannot, however, be inferred, from our acknowledged ignorance of the nature and attributes of the Supreme Being, that we are equally ignorant as to His existence. ‘The wonderful structure and growth of even so trifling an object as a leaf of a tree, affords proof of an Almighty Superintendent of the universe ; and even the physical world affords numerous instances of things whose existence is quite evident to our senses, but of whose nature we can form no conception ; such as the causes of the sensations of heat and vision.

The learned Brahmun attempts to prove the impossibility of an adoration of the Deity, saying (p. 33, l. 15) : “That which “cannot be conceived, cannot be worshipped.” Should the learned Brahmun consider a full conception of the nature, essence, or qualities of the Supreme Being, or a physical picture truly representing the Almighty power, with offerings of flowers, leaves, and viands, as essential to adoration, I agree with the learned Brahmun with respect to the impossibility of the worship of God. But, should adoration imply only the elevation of the mind to the conviction of the existence of the Omnipresent Deity, as testified by His wise and wonderful works, and continual contemplation of His power as so displayed, together with a constant sense of the gratitude which we naturally owe Him, for our existence, sensation, and comfort,—I never will hesitate to assert, that His adoration is not only possible, and practicable, but even incumbent upon every rational creature. For further explanation, I refer the learned Brahmun to the text 47, sect. 4, chap. 3, of the Vedant.

To his question,\* “What are you yourselves ?” I suppose I may safely reply for myself, that I am a poor dependent creature ;—subject, in common with others, to momentary changes, and liable to sudden destruction.

At p. 45, l. 30, the learned Brahmun, if I rightly understand his object, means to insinuate, that I have adopted the doctrines

\* P. 47, l. 4.

of those who deny the responsibility of man as a moral agent. I am quite at a loss to conceive from what part of my writings this inference has been drawn, as I have not only never entertained such opinions myself, but have taken pains to explain the passage in the Ved on which this false doctrine is founded. In page 93\* of the Preface to the Ishopanishad, I have said that, "the Vedant by declaring that God is everywhere, and every thing is in God, means that nothing is absent from God, and that nothing bears real existence except by the volition of God." And again, in the same page I quoted the example of the most revered teachers of the Vedant doctrine, who, "although they declared their faith in the Omnipresent God, according to the doctrines of the Vedant, assigned to every creature the particular character and respect he was entitled to."

I omitted to notice the strange mode of argument which the learned Brahmun (at p. 29) has adopted in defence of idolatry. After acknowledging that the least deficiency in judgment renders man incapable of looking up to an Omnipresent Supreme Being, whereby he mistakes a created object for the great Creator, he insinuates that an erroneous notion in this respect is as likely to lead to eternal happiness, as a knowledge of truth. At l. 5, he says : "And although a person through deficiency in judgment, should be unable to discover the real nature of a thing, does it follow, that his error will prevent the natural effect from appearing? When a man in a dream sees a tiger, is he not in as much alarm as if he saw it in reality?"

This mode of claiming for idol-worship a value equal to that of pure religion, which it can never be admitted to possess, may have succeeded in retaining some of his followers in the delusive dream, from which he is so anxious that they should not be awoke. But some of them have, I know, begun to inquire into the truth of those notions in which they have been instructed ; and these are not likely to mistake for true, the false analogy that is in above passage attempted to be drawn, nor will they

\* See page 80 of this edition.—Ed.

believe that, however powerful may be the influence of imagination, even under false impressions, future happiness, which depends on God alone, can ever be ranked amongst its effects. Such enquirers will, I hope, at last become sensible that the system of *dreaming* recommended by the learned Brahmun, however essential to the interests of himself and of his caste, can bring to them no advantage, either substantial or eternal.

As instances of the erroneous confidence which is placed in the repetition of the name of a god to effect purification from sins, noticed by me in p. 168, (\*) I may quote the following passages.

He who pronounces “Doorga” (the name of the goddess), though he constantly practise adultery, plunder others of their property, or commit the most heinous crimes, is freed from all

A person pronouncing loudly, “reverence to Hurf,” even involuntarily, in the state of falling down, of slipping, of labouring under illness, or of sneezing, purifies himself from the foulest crimes.†

He who contemplates the Ganges, while walking, sitting, sleeping, thinking of other things, awake, eating, breathing, and conversing, is delivered from sins.‡

The circumstances alluded to in p. 168 (\*) of this treatise, relative to the wicked conduct of their supposed deities, are perfectly familiar to every individual Hindoo. But those Europeans who are not acquainted with the particulars related of them, may perhaps feel a wish to be in possession of them. I, therefore, with a view to gratify their curiosity and to vindicate my assertion, beg to be allowed to mention a few instances in point, with the authorities on which they rest. As I have already noticed the debauchery of Krishna, and his gross sensuality, and that of his fellow deities, such as Siva and Bruhma, in the 147th, 148th, and 150th page (\*\*) of my reply to

\* Vide Doorga nām Mahatmyu. † Vide Bháguvut. ‡ Vide Maha-Bharuth.

(\*) See pages 131, 132, 115, 116, 117, of this edition.—ED.

the observations of Supkar Sastri, instead of repeating them here, I refer my readers to that reply, and also to the tenth division of the Bhaguvut, to the Hury-Bunsu or last division of the Maha-Bharuth, and to the Nigums, as well as to the several Agums, which give a detailed account of their lewdness and debauchery. As to falsehood, their favourite deity Krishna is more conspicuous than the rest. Jura-Sundh, a powerful prince of Behar, having heard of the melancholy murder of his son-in-law perpetrated by Krishna, harassed, and at last drove him out of the place of his nativity (Muthoora) by frequent military expeditions. Krishna, in revenge, resolved to deprive that prince of his life by fraud, and in a most unjustifiable manner. To accomplish his object, he and his two cousins, Bheema and Urjoona, declared themselves to be Brahmuns, and in that disguise entered his palace ; where finding him weakened by a religious fast, and surrounded only by his family and priests, they challenged him to fight a duel. He accordingly fought Bheema, the strongest of the three, who conquered and put him to death.—*Vide Subha Purba or second Book of the Maha-Bharuth.* Krishna again persuaded Yoodhisthir, his cousin, to give false evidence in order to accomplish the murder of Dron their spiritual father.—*Vide Dron Purba, or seventh Book of the Maha-Bharuth.*

Vishnoo and others combined in a conspiracy against Buli, a mighty emperor ; but finding his power irresistible, that deity was determined to ruin him by stratagem, and for that purpose appeared to him in the shape of a dwarf, begging alms. Notwithstanding Buli was warned of the intention of Vishnoo, yet, impressed with a high sense of generosity, he could not refuse a boon to a beggar ; that a grateful deity in return not only deprived him of his whole empire, which he put himself in possession of by virtue of the boon of Buli, but also inflicted on him the disgrace of bondage and confinement in Patal.—*Vide latter part of the Hurry-Bunsu, or last book of the Maha-Bharuth.*

When the battle of Coorookshetru was decided by the fatal

destruction of Doorjodhun, the remaining part of the army of his rival, Yoodhisthir, returned to the camp to rest during the night, under the personal care and protection of Mahadeva. That deity having, however, been cajoled by the flattery offered him by Uswathama, one of the friends of the unfortunate Doorjodhun, not only allowed him to destroy the whole army that was asleep under the confidence of his protection, but even assisted him with his sword to accomplish his bloody purpose.—*Vide Sou-suptik Purb, or eleventh book of the Maha-Bharuth.*

When the Usoors, at the churning of the ocean, gave the pitcher of *the water of immortality* in charge to Vishnoo, he betrayed his trust by delivering it to their step-brothers and enemies, the celestial gods.—*Vide first book, or Adi Purb of the Maha-Bharuth.*

Instances like these might be multiplied beyond number : and crimes of a much deeper dye might easily be added to the list, were I not unwilling to stain these pages by making them the vehicle of such stories of immorality and vice. May God speedily purify the minds of my countrymen from the corruptness which such tales are too apt to produce, and lead their hearts to that pure morality, which is inseparable from the true worship of Him !

AN APOLOGY  
FOR THE  
PURSUIT OF FINAL BEATITUDE,  
INDEPENDENTLY OF  
BRAHMUNICAL OBSERVANCES.

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CALCUTTA :

1820.





# AN APOLOGY

FOR THE

## PURSUIT OF FINAL BEATITUDE.

SOOBRAHMUNYU SHASTREE, a diligent observer of Brahmuni-cal tenets, wishing to prove that those Brahmuns who do not study the Veds with their subordinate sciences, are degraded from the rank of Brahmunism, prepared and offered an Essay on that subject to the Brahmuns of the province of Bengal, who are generally deficient in those studies. In this, he has advanced three assertions : which, however, have no tendency to establish his position. He alleges 1st, that, “to a person not acquainted “with the Veds, neither temporary heavenly enjoyments, nor “eternal beatitude, can be allotted.” 2dly, that, “he only who “has studied the Veds is authorized to seek the knowledge of “God ;” and 3dly, that “men must perform without omission “all the rites and duties prescribed in the Veds and Smritis be- “fore acquiring a thorough knowledge of God.” On these posi-tions he attempts to establish, that the performance of the duties and rites prescribed by the Shastrus for each class according to their religious order, such as the studies of the Veds and the offering of sacrifices, &c., is absolutely necessary towards the ac-quisition of a knowledge of God. We consequently take upon ourselves to offer in our own defence the following remarks, in answer to those assertions.

We admit that it is proper in men to observe the duties and rites prescribed by the Shastru for each class according to their religious order, in acquiring knowledge respecting God, such

observance being conducive to that acquisition, an admission which is not inconsistent with the authorities of the Veds and other Shastrus. But we can by no means admit the necessity of observing those duties and rites as indispensable steps towards attaining divine knowledge, which the learned Shastree pronounces them to be ; for the great Vyas, in his work of the Vedant Durshun, or the explanation of the spiritual parts of the Veds, justifies the attainment of the knowledge of God, even by those who never practise the prescribed duties and rites, as appears from the following two passages of Vyas in the same Durshun. “Unturachapitoo tuddrishteh,”—“Upichu shmuryute.”\* The celebrated Shunkur-Acharyu thus comments upon those two texts: “As to the question, Whether such men as have not the sacred fire, or are afflicted with poverty, who profess no religious order whatsoever, and who do not belong to any caste, are authorized to seek divine knowledge or not ? On a superficial view, it appears, that they are not permitted to make such attainments, as the duties prescribed for each class are declared to lead to divine knowledge, and to those duties they are altogether strangers. Such doubt having arisen, the great Vyas thus decides : Even a person who professes no religious order, is permitted to acquire a knowledge of God, for it is found in the Veds that Rüekyu, Bachuknuvce, and others, who, like them, did not belong to any class, obtained divine knowledge. It is also mentioned in the sacred tradition, the Sunvurtu and others, living naked and totally independent of the world, who practised no prescribed duties, assumed the rank of the highest devotees.” Besides the texts of the Ved, such as “Tuyorhu Müetreyee Bruhmubadinee,” &c. and “Atma va ure” &c.† show that Müetreyee and others, who, being women, had not the option of studying the Ved, were, notwithstanding, qualified to acquire divine knowledge; and in the Smriti as well as in the Com-

\* “अन्तराचापि तु तद्विष्टेः ।” “अपि च अर्ह्यते ।”—ED.

† “तथाहं मैत्रेयी ब्रह्मवादिनी बभूव ।” “आत्मा वा परे इष्टव्यः ।”—ED.

mentary of the celebrated Shunkur-Acharyu, Soolubha and other women are styled knowers of the Supreme Being. Also Bidoor, Dhurmubyadhu, and others of the fourth class, attained the knowledge of God without having an opportunity of studying the Veds. All this we find in the sacred traditions: hence those who have a thorough knowledge of the Veds and Smriti, can pay no deference to the opinion maintained by the learned Shastree, that those only who have studied the Veds are qualified to acquire the knowledge of God. Moreover, to remove all doubt as to Soodrus and others being capable of attaining Divine knowledge without the assistance of the Veds, the celebrated Commentator, in illustrating the text "Sruvunadhyun,"\* &c., asserts, that "the authority of the Smriti, stating that 'to all the four classes preaching should be offered,' &c., shews that to the "sacred traditions, and to the Poorans, and also to the Agums, "all the four classes have equally access," thus establishing that the sacred traditions, Poorans, and Agum without distinction, can impart divine knowledge to mankind at large. From the decided opinion of Vyas, and from the precedents given by the Veds and sacred traditions, and also from the conclusive verdict of the most revered Commentator, those who entertain respect for those authorities, will not admit the studies of the Veds and other duties required of each class to be the only means of acquiring knowledge of God. Hence the sacred tradition, stating that a person, by studying the Geeta alone, had acquired final beatitude, stands unshaken; and also the positive declaration of the great Muhadevu with regard to the authentic and well-accepted Agum Shastrus, as being the means of imparting divine knowledge to those who study them, will not be treated as inconsequential. If the spiritual parts of the Veds can enable men to acquire salvation by teaching them the true and eternal existence of God, and the false and perishable being of the universe, and inducing them to hear and constantly

\* अथवाध्ययनार्थप्रतिषेधात् अतेश्च ।

Vedant, Ch. 1, Sec. 3, text 38.—ED.

reflect on those doctrines, it is consistent with reason to admit, that the Smriti, and Agum, and other works, inculcating the same doctrines, afford means of attaining final beatitude. What should we say more ?

This treatise was rendered into Sanskrit, Hindi, and Bengali. Vide pages 415 to 431 of the collected edition of the Bengali and Sanskrit works of Rajah Ram Mohun Roy.—ED.

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# RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTIONS

FOUNDED ON

CALCUTTA:

1751 S.



# RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTIONS

FOUNDED ON SACRED AUTHORITIES.

THE following Treatise, in the form of questions and answers, contains a brief account of the worship enjoined in the sacred writings, as due to that Being who is pure as well as eternal, and to whose existence Nature gives testimony ; that the faithful may easily understand and become successful in the practice of this worship. The proof of each doctrine may be found, according to the figures, in the end of the work.

As this subject is almost always expounded, in the sacred writings, by means of questions and answers, that it may be more easily comprehended, a similar plan is adopted in this place also.

1 *Question*.—What is meant by worship ?

*Answer*.—Worship implies the act of one with a view to please another ; but when applied to the Supreme Being, it signifies a contemplation of his attributes.

2 *Q*.—To whom is worship due ?

*A*.—To the AUTHOR and Governor of the universe, which is incomprehensibly formed, and filled with an endless variety of men and things ; in which, as shown by the zodiac, in a manner far more wonderful than the machinery of a watch, the sun, the moon, the planets, and the stars perform their rapid courses ; and which is fraught with animate and inanimate matter of various kinds, locomotive and immoveable, of which there is not one particle but has its functions to perform.

3 *Q*.—What is He ?

*A*.—We have already mentioned that he is to be worshipped, who is the Author and Governor of the universe ; yet, neither the sacred writings nor logical argument, can define his nature.

4 *Q*.—Are there no means of defining him ?



A.—It is repeatedly declared in the sacred writings, that he cannot be defined either by the intellect or by language. This appears from inference also ; for, though the universe is visible, still no one can ascertain its form or extent. How then can we define the Being, whom we designate as its Author and Governor ?

5 Q.—Is any one, on sufficient grounds, opposed to this worship ?

A.—To this worship no one can be opposed on sufficient grounds ; for, as we all worship the Supreme Being, adoring him as the Author and Governor of the universe, it is impossible for any one to object to such worship ; because each person considers the object whom he worships as the Author and Governor of the universe ; therefore, in accordance with his own faith, he must acknowledge that this worship is his own. In the same manner, they, who consider Time or Nature, or any other Object, as the Governor of the universe, even they cannot be opposed to this worship, as bearing in mind the Author and Governor of the universe. And in China, in Tartary, in Europe, and in all other countries, where so many sects exist, all believe the object whom they adore to be the Author and Governor of the universe ; consequently, they also must acknowledge, according to their own faith, that this our worship is their own.

6 Q.—In some places in the sacred writings it is written that the Supreme Being is imperceptible and unexpressible ; and in others, that he is capable of being known. How can this be reconciled ?

A.—Where it is written that he is imperceptible and undefinable, it is meant, that his likeness cannot be conceived ; and where it is said that he is capable of being known, his mere existence is referred to, that is, that there is a God, as the indescribable creation and government of this universe clearly demonstrate : in the same manner, as by the action of a body, we ascertain the existence of a spirit therein called the sentient soul, but the form or likeness of that spirit which pervades every limb and guides the body, we know not.

7 Q.—Are you hostile, to any other worship ?

A.—Certainly not ; for, he who worships, be it whomsoever or whatsoever it may, considers that object as the Supreme Being, or as an object containing him ; consequently, what cause have we to be hostile to him ?

8 Q.—If you worship the Supreme Being, and other persons offer their adoration to the same Divine Being, but in a different form ; what then is the difference between them and you ?

A.—We differ in two ways ; first, they worship under various forms and in particular places, believing the object of their worship to be the Supreme Being ; but we declare that He, who is the Author of the universe, is to be worshipped ; besides this, we can determine no particular form or place. Secondly, we see that they, who worship under any one particular form, are opposed to those who worship under another ; but it is impossible for worshippers of any denomination to be opposed to us ; as we have shown in the answer to the 5th question.

9 Q.—In what manner is this worship to be performed ?

A.—By bearing in mind that the Author and Governor of this visible universe is the Supreme Being, and comparing this idea with the sacred writings and with reason. In this worship it is indispensibly necessary to use exertions to subdue the senses, and to read such passages as direct attention to the Supreme Spirit. Exertion to subdue the senses, signifies an endeavour to direct the will and the senses, and the conduct in such a manner as not only to prevent our own or others ill, but to secure our own and others good ; in fact, what is considered injurious to ourselves, should be avoided towards others. It is obvious that as we are so constituted, that without the help of sound we can conceive no idea ; therefore, by means of the texts treating of the Supreme Being, we should contemplate him. The benefits which we continually receive from fire, from air, and from the sun, likewise from the various productions of the earth, such as the different kinds of grain, drugs, fruits, and vegetables, all are dependent on him : and by considering and reasoning on the

terms expressive of such ideas, the meaning itself is firmly fixed in the mind. It is repeatedly said in the sacred writings, that theological knowledge is dependent upon truth ; consequently, the attainment of truth will enable us to worship the Supreme Being, who is Truth itself.

10 Q.—According to this worship, what rule must we establish with regard to the regulation of our food, conduct, and other worldly matters ?

A.—It is proper to regulate our food and conduct agreeably to the sacred writings ; therefore, he who follows no prescribed form among all those that are promulgated, but regulates his food and conduct according to his own will, is called self-willed ; and to act according to our own wish, is opposed both by the Scriptures and by reason. In the Scriptures it is frequently forbidden. Let us examine it by reason. Suppose each person should, in non-conformity with prescribed form, regulate his conduct according to his own desires, a speedy end must ensue to established societies ; for to the self-willed, food, whether fit to be eaten or not, conduct proper or improper, desires lawful or unlawful, all are the same ; he is guided by no rule : to him an action, performed according to the will, is faultless : but the will of all is not alike ; consequently, in the fulfilment of our desires, where numerous opinions are mutually opposed, a quarrel is the most likely consequence ; and the probable result of repeated quarrels, is the destruction of human beings. In fact, however, it is highly improper to spend our whole time in judging of the propriety and impropriety of certain foods, without reflecting on science or Divine truth ; for be food of whatever kind it may, in a very short space of time it undergoes a change into what is considered exceedingly impure, and this impure matter is, in various places, productive of different kinds of grain ; therefore, it is certainly far more preferable to adorn the mind than to think of purifying the belly.

11 Q.—In the performance of this worship, is any particular place, quarter, or time, necessary ?

A.—A suitable place \* is certainly preferable, but it is not absolutely necessary ; that is to say, in whatever place, towards whatever quarter, or at whatever time, the mind is best at rest, —that place, that quarter, and that time, is the most proper for the performance of this worship.

12 Q.—To whom is this worship fit to be taught ?

A.—It may be taught to all, but effect being produced in each person according to his state of mental preparation, it will be proportionably successful.

## SACRED AUTHORITIES.

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सत् ॥ आदौ सच्छब्दप्रयोगो माङ्गलिकः तथाच भगवद्गीतायां ।  
सङ्गावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत् प्रयुज्यते । प्रशस्ते कर्मणि तथा  
सच्छब्दः पार्थ युज्यते ॥ \*

1st उत्तरप्रमाणं । आत्मेत्येवोपासीत । ( बृहदारण्यक  
श्रुतिः । ) न स वेदेति विज्ञानं प्रस्तुत्य आत्मेत्येवोपासीतेत्यभि-  
धानात् वेदोपासनशब्दयोरेकार्थताऽवगम्यते ( भाष्यं । ) आत्मान  
मेव लोकमुपासीत । ( बृहदारण्यक श्रुतिः । )

2nd उत्तरप्रमाणं । जन्माद्यस्य यतः । ( वेदान्तदर्शनस्य  
द्वितीयसूत्रं । ) यतोवा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते येन जातानि  
जौवन्ति यत् प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति तद्विजिज्ञासस्व तद्ब्रह्मेति ।  
( तैत्तिरीय श्रुतिः । ) यः सर्वज्ञः सर्व्वं वित् यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः ।  
तस्मादेतद्ब्रह्म नाम रूपमब्रह्म जायते । ( मुण्डक श्रुतिः । )

\* The Bengali version of this treatise was named Anootan and on the top of the first page of the same was the word सत् for which this explanation has been given and the authority cited.—ED.

यत्तत् कारण मव्यक्तं नित्यं सदसदार्षकं । तद्विष्टुष्टः स पुरुषो  
लोके ब्रह्मेति कौत्स्यते ॥ ( मनुवचनं, १ ) यतो विश्वं समुद्भूतं येन  
जातञ्च तिष्ठति । यस्मिन् सर्वाणि स्वीयन्ते तज्ज्ञेयं ब्रह्मलक्षणं ॥  
कालं कलयते काले मृत्यो मृत्यु भिर्यो भयं । वेदान्त-  
वेद्यं चिद्रूपं यत्तच्छब्दोपलक्षितं ॥ ( महानिर्वाणतन्त्रवचनं । )  
अस्य जगतो नामरूपाभ्यां व्याकृतस्यानेककलर्भोक्तृसंयुक्तस्य  
प्रतिनियतदेशकालनिमित्तक्रियाफलाश्रयस्य मनसाप्राचिन्त्य-  
रचनारूपस्य जन्मस्थितिभङ्गं यतः सर्वज्ञात् सर्वशक्तेः कारणा-  
द्भवति तद्ब्रह्मेति वाक्यशेषः । ( पूर्वोक्तवेदान्तसूत्रभाष्यं । )

3rd उत्तरप्रमाणं । यतोवाचो निवर्त्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा  
सह । ( तैत्तिरीयश्रुतिः । ) यस्मन्मनसा न मनुते येनाहुर्मनोमतं ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ( केनश्रुतिः । )

4th उत्तरप्रमाणं । अथात आदेशो नेति नेति । ( बृहदार-  
ण्यकश्रुतिः । ) न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग्गच्छति न मनो न  
विद्यो न विजानीमो यथैतदनुशिष्यात् अन्यदेव तद्विदितादथो  
अविदितादधि । ( केन श्रुतिः । ) इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः  
परं मनः । मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्वुद्ध्येयं परतस्तु सः ॥ ( गीतास्मृतिः । )

5th उत्तरप्रमाणं । आत्माह्येषां स भवति । एवं वित् सर्वेषां  
भूतानामात्मा भवति । ( बृहदारण्यकश्रुतिः । ) नामरूपादि-  
निर्देशैर्विभिन्नानामुपासकाः । परस्परं विरुद्ध्यन्ति न तैरेतद्वि-  
रुधते ॥ ( गौडपादाचार्यकारिका । ) विस्तारितमिदं प्रथम-  
व्याख्याने ।

6th उत्तरप्रमाणं । नैव वाचा न मनसा प्राप्तुं शक्यो न  
चक्षुषा । अस्तीति ब्रुवतीऽन्यत्र कथं तदुपलभ्यते ॥ अस्तीत्ये-

वोपलब्धस्य स्तत्त्वभावेन चैभयोः । अस्तित्विनोपलब्धस्य तत्त्वभावः प्रसीदति ॥ ( कठश्रुतिः । ) नामरूपाद-निर्द्देश-विशेषण-विवर्जितः । अपचयविनाशाभ्यां परिणामार्त्तिजन्मभिः । वर्जितः शक्यते वक्तुं यः सदास्तीति केवलं ॥ ( विष्णुपुराणं । ) द्वादश-व्याख्याने विस्तरेणाभिहितं ।

7th उत्तरप्रमाणं । तपांसि सर्वाणिच यद्वदन्ति । ( कठश्रुतिः । ) ब्रह्मदृष्टिरुत्कर्षात् । ( वेदान्तसूत्रं । ) ब्रह्मदृष्टिरादित्यादिषु स्यात् कस्मात् उत्कर्षात् एवमुत्कर्षणादित्यादयो दृष्टा भवन्ति उत्कृष्ट-दृष्टिस्तैश्च धरासात् । ( तत् सूत्रभाष्यं । ) येऽप्यन्यदेवता भक्ता यजन्ते अहयान्विताः । तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकं ॥ ( गोताश्चरितः । )

8th उत्तरप्रमाणं । यत्र नान्यत् पश्यति नान्यच्छृणोति नान्यद्विजानाति स भूमा अथ यत्रान्यत् पश्यति अन्यच्छृणोति अन्यद्विजानाति तदल्पं । ( छान्दोग्योपनिषत् । ) पञ्चमोत्तरोक्त-प्रमाणमपि द्रष्टव्यं ।

9th उत्तरप्रमाणं । अथ परमेश्वरचिन्तनप्रकारः । जड्वृ-  
मूलोऽवाक्शाख एषोऽश्वस्यः सनातनः । तदेव शुक्रं तद्व्रह्म तदेवांमृतं मुच्यते ॥ ( कठोपनिषत् । ) तस्मादृचः साम यजूंषि दीक्षा यज्ञाश्च सर्वे क्रतवो दक्षिणाश्च । संवत्सरश्च यजमानश्च लोकाः सोमो यत्र पवते यत्र सूर्यः । तस्माच्च देवा बहुधा संप्रसूताः साध्या मनुष्याः पशवो वर्यांसि । प्राणापाणौ ब्रौहि-  
यवौ तपश्च अह्ना सत्यं ब्रह्मचर्यं विधिश्च । अतः समुद्रा गिरयश्च सर्वे तस्मात् स्यन्दन्ते सिन्धवः सर्वरूपाः । अतश्च सर्वा ओषधयो रसश्च येनैष भूतैस्तिष्ठते ह्यन्तरात्मा ॥ ( इति मुण्डकोपनिषत् । )

ज्ञानेनैवापरे विप्रा यजन्तेतै मखैः सदा । ज्ञानमूलां क्रियामेषां  
पश्यन्तो ज्ञानचक्षुषा ॥ (चतुर्थाध्याये मनुवचनं ।) भयादस्या-  
ग्निस्तपति भयात्तपति सूर्यः । भयादिन्द्रश्च वायुश्च मृत्युर्धावति  
पञ्चमः ॥ (इति मुण्डकोपनिषत् ।) एतदुपासनाया अन्तरङ्ग-  
साधनप्रकारः । यथोक्तान्यपि कर्माणि परिहाय द्विजोत्तमः ।  
आत्मज्ञाने शमे च स्याद्देहाभ्यासे च यत्नवान् ॥ (द्वादशाध्याये  
मनुवचनं ।) यथैवात्मा परस्तद्वद्व्यः शुभमिच्छता । सुखदुःखानि  
तुलानि यथात्मनि तथा परे ॥ इति स्मार्त्तधृतदत्तवचनं  
सर्वव्यवहारनिदानं । सत्यमायतनं (केनश्रुतिः ।) द्वितीय-  
चतुर्थषष्ठ्याख्यानेषु लिखितान्यपि द्रष्टव्यानि ।

10th उत्तरप्रमाणं । शास्त्रमेव क्रियानियामकं यथारु । चातु-  
र्वर्ण्यं त्रयो लोकाश्चत्वार आश्रमाः पृथक् । भूतं भव्यं भविष्यञ्च  
सर्वं वेदात् प्रसिध्यति ॥ (८७) सेनापत्यञ्च राज्यञ्च दण्डनेतृत्व  
मेव च । सर्वलोकाधिपत्यञ्च वेदशास्त्रविदहन्ति ॥ (१००) मनु-  
स्मृतौ द्वादशाध्याये ।

दशमोत्तरोक्त-स्वेच्छाचार-निन्दाश्रवणं ।

क्रियाहीनस्य मूर्खस्य महारोगिण एव च । यथेष्टाचरणस्याहु  
मरणान्तमशौचकं ॥ उदरपवित्रतापेक्षया मनःशुद्धौ यत्न आव-  
श्यकः । तथाहि तन्त्रे । मले परिणते शस्यं शस्ये परिणते मलं ।  
द्रव्यशुद्धिः कथं देवि मनःशुद्धिं समाचरेत् ॥

11th उत्तरप्रमाणं । शुचिदेशादेः प्राशस्त्ये ।

कुटुम्बे शुचौ देशे स्वाध्यायमधीयानो धार्मिकान् विदधदित्यादि  
(छान्दोग्यश्रुतिः ।)

शुचिदेशादीनामत्यन्तनियमस्याभावः । यथा ।

यत्रैकाग्रता तत्राविशेषात् (वेदान्तदर्शनसूत्रं) ४।१।११<sup>५</sup>।  
यत्रैवास्य दिने काले वा मनसः सौकर्येणैकाग्रता भवति तत्रै-  
वोपासीत प्राची दिक् पूर्वाङ्ग प्राचीप्रवणादिवत् विशेषाश्रव-  
णात् ( भाष्यं । )

12th उत्तरप्रमाणं । प्रजापतेः सकाशादिन्द्रविरोचनाभ्यां  
प्राप्तेऽपि तुल्योपदेशे असुरस्वभावाद्विरोचनस्तदुपदेशफलं न  
लेभे । तथाहि । सहि शान्तहृदय एव विरोचनोऽसुरान् जगाम  
तेभ्योऽहैता मुपनिषदं प्रोवाच आत्मैवेह मह्य्य आत्मा परिचर्य  
आत्मानमेवेह मह्यन् आत्मानं परिचरन् उभौ लोकाववाप्नोति  
इमञ्चामुञ्चेति । (छान्दोग्योपनिषत् । )

• इन्द्रस्तु क्रमसाधनेन कृतार्थोऽभवत् । यथा ।

अश्व इव रोमाणि विधूय पापं चन्द्र इव राहोर्मुखात् प्रमुञ्च  
धूत्वा शरीरं सकृतं कृतारम्भा इत्यादि (छान्दोग्योपनिषत् । )





THE  
BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE

OR  
THE MISSIONARY AND THE BRAHMUN

A VINDICATION OF THE HINDOO RELIGION AGAINST THE ATTACKS OF  
CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES.

CALCUTTA

1821.



P R E F A C E  
TO THE SECOND EDITION.

In giving the contents of the following pages to the world in a new edition, I think it necessary to prefix a short explanation of the origin of the controversy, and the manner in which it concluded. The BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE was commenced for the purpose of answering the objections against the Hindoo Religion contained in a Bengallee Weekly Newspaper, entitled "SUMMACHAR DURPUN," conducted by some of the most eminent of the Christian Missionaries, and published at Shree-rampore. In that paper of the 14th July 1821, a letter was inserted containing certain doubts regarding the Shastrus to which the writer invited any one to favor him with an answer, through the same channel. I accordingly sent a reply in the Bengallee language, to which however the conductors of the work calling for it, refused insertion ; and I therefore formed the resolution of publishing the whole controversy with an English translation in a work of my own "the Brahmuncal Magazine," now re-printed, which contains all that was written on both sides.

In the first number of the MAGAZINE I replied to the arguments they adduced against the Shastrus, or immediate explanations of the "Veds," our original Sacred Books ; and in the second I answered the objections urged against the Poorans and Tuntrus, or Historical Illustrations of the Hindoo Mythology, shewing that the doctrines of the former are much more rational than the religion which the Missionaries profess, and that those of the latter, if unreasonable, are not more so than their Christian Faith. To this the Missionaries made a reply in their work entitled the "FRIEND OF INDIA," No. 38, which was immediately answered by me in the 3rd No. of the Magazine ; and from the continuation of a regular controversy of this kind, I expected that in a very short time, the truth or fallacy of one or other of our religious systems would be

clearly established ; but to my great surprise and disappointment, the Christian Missionaries after having provoked the discussion, suddenly abandoned it ; and the 3rd No. of my Magazine has remained unanswered for nearly two years. During that long period the Hindoo community (to whom the work was particularly addressed and therefore printed both in Bengallee and English) have made up their minds that the arguments of the BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE are unanswerable ; and I now republished, therefore, only the English translation, that the learned among Christians, in Europe as well as in Asia, may form their opinion on the subject.

It is well known to the whole world, that no people on earth are more tolerant than the Hindoos, who believe all men to be equally within the reach of Divine beneficence, which embraces the good of every religious sect and denomination : therefore it cannot be imagined that my object in publishing this Magazine was to oppose Christianity ; but I was influenced by the conviction that persons who travel to a distant country for the purpose of overturning the opinions of its inhabitants and introducing their own, ought to be prepared to demonstrate that the latter are more reasonable than the former.

In conclusion, I beg to ask every candid and reflecting reader :—Whether a man be placed on an imperial throne, or sit in the dust—whether he be lord of the whole known world, or destitute of even a hut—the commander of millions, or without a single follower—whether he be intimately acquainted with all human learning, or ignorant of letters—whether he be ruddy and handsome, or dark and deformed—yet if while he declares that God is not man, he again professes to believe in a God-Man or Man-God, under whatever sophistry the idea may be sheltered,—can such a person have a just claim to enjoy respect in the intellectual world ? and does he not expose himself to censure, should he, at the same time, ascribe unreasonableness to others ?

## PREFACE

### TO THE FIRST EDITION.\*

For a period of upwards of fifty years, this country (Bengal) has been in exclusive possession of the English nation ; during the first thirty years of which from their word and deed it was universally believed that they would not interfere with the religion of their subjects, and that they truly wished every man to act in such matters according to the dictates of his own conscience. Their possessions in Hindoostan and their political strength have, through the grace of God, gradually increased. But during the last twenty years, a body of English Gentlemen who are called missionaries, have been publicly endeavouring, in several ways, to convert Hindoos and Mussulmans of this country into Christianity. The first way is, that of publishing and distributing among the natives various books, large and small, reviling both religions, and abusing and ridiculing the gods and saints of the former : the second way is, that of standing in front of the doors of the natives or in the public roads to preach the excellency of their own religion and the debasedness of that of others : the third way is, that if any natives of low origin become Christians from the desire of gain or from any other motives, these Gentlemen employ and maintain them, as a necessary encouragement to others to follow their example.

It is true that the apostles of Jesus Christ used to preach the superiority of the Christian religion to the natives of different countries. But we must recollect that they were not of the rulers of those countries where they preached. Were the missionaries likewise to preach the Gospel and distribute books in

\* This is reprinted from the second edition published in Calcutta, August 1823. The first edition was printed (1821) in pages having the Bengali, ব্রাহ্মণ সেবকি, on one side and the English, Brahmuncial Magazine, on the other, both being the same thing in different languages.—Ed.

countries not conquered by the English, such as Turkey, Persia, &c. which are much nearer England, they would be esteemed a body of men truly zealous in propagating religion and in following the example of the founders of Christianity. In Bengal, where the English are the sole rulers, and where the mere name of Englishman is sufficient to frighten people, an encroachment upon the rights of her poor timid and humble inhabitants and upon their religion, cannot be viewed in the eyes of God or the Public as a justifiable act. For wise and good men always feel disinclined to hurt those that are of much less strength than themselves, and if such weak creatures be dependent on them and subject to their authority, they can never attempt, even in thought, to mortify their feelings.

We have been subjected to such insults for about nine centuries, and the cause of such degradation has been, our excess in civilization and abstinence from the slaughter even of animals; as well as our division into castes which has been the source of want of unity among us.

It seems almost natural that when one nation succeeds in conquering another, the former, though their religion may be quite ridiculous, laugh at and despise the religion and manners of those that are fallen into their power. For example, Mussulmans, upon their conquest of India, proved highly inimical to the religious exercises of Hindoos. When the generals of Chungezkhan, who denied God and were like wild beasts in their manners, invaded the western part of Hindoostan, they universally mocked at the profession of God and of futurity expressed to them by the natives of India. The savages of Arracan on their invasion of the eastern part of Bengal, always attempted to degrade the religion of Hindoos. In ancient days, the Greeks and the Romans who were gross idolaters and immoral in their lives, used to laugh at the religion and conduct of their Jewish subjects, a sect who were devoted to the belief of one God. It is therefore not uncommon if the English missionaries, who are of the conquerors of this country, revile and mock at the religion

of its natives. But as the English are celebrated for the manifestation of humanity and for administering justice, and as a great many Gentlemen among them are noticed to have had an aversion to violate equity, it would tend to destroy their acknowledged character, if they follow the example of the former savage conquerors in disturbing the established religion of the country ; because to introduce a religion by means of abuse and insult, or by affording the hope of worldly gain, is inconsistent with reason and justice. If by the force of argument they can prove the truth of their own religion and the falsity of that of Hindoos, many would of course embrace their doctrines, and in case they fail to prove this, they should not undergo such useless trouble, nor tease Hindoos any longer by their attempts at conversion. In consideration of the small huts in which Brahmuns of learning generally reside, and the simple food, such as vegetables &c. which they are accustomed to eat, and the poverty which obliges them to live upon charity, the missionary Gentlemen may not, I hope, abstain from controversy from contempt of them, for truth and true religion do not always belong to wealth and power, high names, or lofty palaces.

Now, in the Mission-press of Shreerampore a letter shewing the unreasonableness of all the Hindoo shastrus having appeared, I have inserted in the 1st. & 2nd. number of this magazine all the questions in the above letter as well as their answers, and afterwards the replies that may be made by both parties shall in like manner be published.



## THE LETTER ALLUDED TO

PUBLISHED IN THE

*Sumachar Durpun of the 14th July 1821.*

I beg to inform the learned Public of all countries that at present Calcutta is a seat of learning and of learned men, and perhaps there is no other place where doubts arising from the interpretation of the shastrus can be removed so well as in this metropolis. I therefore state a few questions methodically. It will gratify me, and will perhaps do essential good to mankind, if any one favor me with replies thereto through the Sumachar Durpun ; for in aswering them there will not be much labour and no expence whatever.

In the first place it appears from the perusal of the Vedant shastru, that God is one, eternal, unlimited by past, present, or future time, without form, beyond the apprehension of the senses, void of desires, pure intellect, omnipresent, without defect and perfect in every respect ; and the soul is not different from him nor is there any other real existence besides him.

The visible world is, as it says, created by Maya alone ; and that Maya is opposed to a true knowledge of God (i. e. after the acquisition of a knowledge of God, the effect of Maya, which is the universe, no longer continues to appear a real existence, in the same manner as when a piece of rope is mistaken for a snake, the misconceived existence of the snake is destroyed by a knowledge of the real existence of the rope, or as the palace of Gundhurbs (a Genus supposed to be inferior only to the celestial Gods) seen in a dream ceases to appear immediately after the expiration of the dream.) The world and consciousness are both declared false ; they appear as if they had real existence owing to ignorance of the nature of God. An admission of the truth

of these doctrines either brings reproach upon God, or establishes the supremacy and eternity in some degree both of God and of Maya.

2ndly. If the soul be the same as God, nothing can justify the belief that the soul is liable to be rewarded and punished according to its good or evil works.

3rdly. From these doctrines the perfection of God and his sufficiency cannot be maintained.

This shastru teaches also that as bubbles arise from and again are absorbed in water, in like manner through the influence of Maya the world repeatedly proceeds from, depends upon, and is absorbed into God. How can God be blameless if he is represented as a being influenced by Maya in the creation of the world? The Ved declares "the birth, continuation, and destruction of the world are effected by the Supreme Being." According to this, how can we admit the enjoyment of heaven and endurance of hell by the soul?

In the second place, the Nyayu shastru says, that God is one and souls are various; they both are imperishable; and that space, position, and time as well as atoms are eternal; and it admits that the act of creating the world attaches to God in a peculiarly united relation called Sumubayu whereby the Deity is called the creator of the world; and it says also that according to the good or evil works of the soul he rewards or punishes it, and that his will is immutable. These doctrines in fact deny to God the agency of the world; for according to them he appears, like us, to have created the world with the aid of materials; but in reality he is above the need of assistance. After admitting the immutability of the will of God, how can we be persuaded to believe that he creates, preserves and again destroys all things at different times and bestows on the soul the consequences of its works at successive times. From these doctrines why should we not consider God and the soul as Gods,\* one of great authority and the other of less power, like two men, one possessed of

\* In the Bengali version we find ছোট ঈশ্বর i. e. little God.—Ed.

greater energy than the other? These destroy totally the doctrine of the unity of God.

In the third place the Meemansa shastru says that the wonderful consequences of the various sacrificial rites consisting of incantations composed of the Sunskrit language and of different offerings are God. In this world among mankind there are various languages and many shastrus; and sacrificial articles and language both are insensible and in the power of men: they are however the cause of rites. How can we call God the consequences of the rites which are produced by men? Moreover, God is said by this shastru to be mere rites, and at the same time one; but we see that rites are various: how can then God be proved one according to these doctrines? In a country where rites are performed through a language different from Sunskrit why should not that country be supposed without God? The Patunjul shastru represents yog of six kinds in lieu of rites: therefore it is according to the above-stated arguments included in the Meemansa shastru.

In the fourth instance, the Sankhyu shastru says that nature and the God of nature are operating jointly, like the two halves of a grain of vetch; and on account of the supremacy of the latter he is called the invisible God. How, according to these doctrines, can God be considered one? Why do we not believe the duality of God?

The remaining part of the letter is to be inserted in the 2nd number of this magazine.

*Reply to the above Letter, to which reply the Editor of the Sumachar Durpun denied insertion.*

I observed in the Sumachar Durpun of the 14th July 1821, sent me by a respectable native, an attempt of some intelligent though misinformed person to shew the unreasonableness of all the Hindoo shastrus and thereby to disprove their authority. The missionary Gentlemen had before been in the habit of mak-

ing these attempts only in discourses with the natives or through publications written expressly with that view. But now they have begun the same attacks through the medium of a newspaper. I have not however felt much inclined to blame this conduct, because the Editor has requested an answer to the writer, to whom I therefore reply as follows.

You, in the first place, attempt to shew the folly of the Vedant, and for that purpose recount its doctrines, saying "that it teaches God to be one, eternal, unlimited by past present or future time, without form or desires, beyond the apprehension of the senses, pure intellect, omnipresent, without defect and perfect in every respect ; and that there is no other real existence except him, nor is the soul different from him ; that this visible world is created by his power *i.e.* Maya, and that Maya is opposed to a true knowledge of God, (*i.e.* after the acquisition of a knowledge of God the effect of Maya, which is the universe, no longer continues to appear as a real existence, in the same manner as when a piece of rope is mistaken for a snake the mis-conceived existence of the snake is destroyed by a knowledge of the real existence of the rope, or as the palace of Gundhurb seen in a dream ceases to appear immediately after the expiration of the dream.)" Now you allege these faults in these doctrines. 1st. An admission of their truth either brings reproach upon God or establishes the supremacy and eternity both of God and of Maya. As you have not stated what reproach attaches to God from the admission of these doctrines, I am unable to answer the first alternative. If you kindly particularize it, I may endeavour to make a reply. As to the latter alternative respecting the supremacy and eternity of Maya, I beg to answer, that the followers of the Vedant (in common with Christians and Mussulmans who believe God to be eternal) profess also the eternity of all his attributes. Maya is the creating power of the eternal God, and consequently it is declared by the Vedant to be eternal. "Maya has no separate existence ; it is the power of God and is known by its effects, as heat is the power of fire and has no

separate existence, yet is known from its effects" (quoted in the Vedant.)\* Should it be improper to declare the attributes of God eternal, then such impropriety applies universally to all religious systems, and the Vedant cannot be alone accused of this impropriety.

In like manner, in the Vedant and in other systems, as well as in common experience, the superiority of substance over its qualities is acknowledged. The Vedant has never stated, in any instance, the supremacy both of God and of Maya, that you should charge the Vedant with absurdity.

The second fault which you find, is that if the soul be the same as God, nothing can justify the belief that the soul is liable to be rewarded and punished according to its good and evil words; for such a belief would amount to the blasphemy that God also is liable to reward and punishment.

I reply—The world, as the Vedant says, is the effect of Maya, and is material; but God is mere spirit, whose particular influences being shed upon certain material objects are called souls, in the same manner as the reflections of the sun are seen on water placed in various vessels. As these reflections of the sun seem to be moved by the motion of the water of those vessels without effecting any motion in the sun, so souls, being as it were the reflections of the Supreme Spirit on matter, seem to be affected by the circumstances that influence matter, without God being affected by such circumstances. As some reflections are bright from the purity of the water on which they are cast while others seem obscure owing to its foulness, so some souls are more pure from the purity of the matter with which they are connected, while others are dull owing to the dullness of matter.

As the reflections of the sun, though without light proper to themselves, appear splendid from their connexion with the illuminating sun, so the soul, though not true intellect, seems intellectual, and acts as if it were real spirit from its actual relation to the universal intellect: and as from the particular

relations of the sun to the water placed in different pots, various reflections appear resembling the same sun in nature and differing from it in qualities ; and again as these cease to appear on the removal of the water, so through the peculiar relation of various material objects to one supreme spirit, numerous souls appear and seem as performing good and evil works, and also receiving their consequences ; and as soon as that relation ceases, they, at that very minute cease to appear distinctly from their original. Hence God is one, and the soul, although it is not in fact of a different origin from God, is yet liable to experience the consequences of good and evil works ; but this liability of the soul to reward or punishment cannot render God liable to either.

The third fault alleged by you, is, that from the doctrines alluded to, the perfection of God and his sufficiency cannot be maintained. This is your position, but you have advanced no arguments to prove it. If you afterwards do, I may consider the force of them. If you however mean by the position that if souls be considered as parts of God, as declared by the Vedant, and proceeding from the Supreme spirit, God must be insufficient and imperfect ; I will in this case refer you to the above answer, that is, although the reflections of the sun owe to him their existence and depend upon and return to the same sun, yet this circumstance does not tend to prove the insufficiency or imperfection of the sun.

Moreover, you say the Vedant teaches that as bubbles arise from and again are absorbed in water, in like manner through the influence of Maya the world repeatedly proceeds from, depends upon, and is absorbed into God ; and hence you infer that, according to this doctrine, the reproach of God's being under the influence of Maya, attaches to the Deity. I reply, that the resemblance of the bubbles with the world, is maintained by the Vedant, only in two respects : 1st. as the bubbles receive from water through the influence of the wind their birth and existence, so the world takes by the power of God

its original existence from the Supreme Being and depends upon him ; and 2ndly, that there is no reality in the existence either of bubbles or of the world. When we say such a one is like a lion, we mean resemblance only in respect of courage and strength and not in every respect, as in point of shape, size &c. In like manner the resemblance of the world to bubbles, in this instance, lies in point of dependence and unreality. Were the similarity acknowledged in every respect we must admit God to be an insensitive existence like a portion of water and the world as a bubble to be a small part of God moving sometimes on the surface of the Deity and again uniting with him. Those who look only after faults, may think themselves justified in alleging that in consequence of the comparison of the world to bubbles of water and of Maya to the wind, as found in the Vedant, God is supposed to be influenced by Maya.

Maya is the power of God, through which the world receives its birth, existence and changes ; but no men of learning who are not biassed by partiality, would infer from these opinions, an idea of the inferiority of God to Maya, his attribute. For as men of every tribe and of every country whatsoever, acknowledge God to be the cause of the world, they necessarily consider him possessed of the power through which he creates the world. But no one is from this concluded to believe that God is subordinate to that power. God pardons the sins of those that sincerely repent through his attribute of mercy : this cannot be taken as an admission of the Deity's subjection to his own mercy. The followers of the Vedant say, that Maya is opposed to knowledge, for when a true knowledge of God is obtained the effect of Maya which makes the soul appear distinct from God, does immediately cease.

The term Maya implies, primarily, the power of creation, and, secondarily, its effect, which is the Universe. The Vedant by comparing the world with the misconceived notion of a snake, when a rope really exists, means that the world like the supposed snake has no independent existence, that it receives its existence

from the Supreme being. In like manner, the Vedant compares the world with a dream : as all the objects seen in a dream depend upon the motion of the mind, so the existence of the world is dependent upon the being of God, who is the only object of supreme love ; and in declaring that God is all in all, and that there is no other substance except God, the Vedant means that existence in reality belongs to God alone. He is consequently true and omnipresent ; nothing else can bear the name of true existence. We find the phrases, God is all and in all, in the Christian books ; and I suppose they do not mean by such words that pots, mats &c. are gods. I am inclined to believe that by these terms they mean the omnipresence of God. Why do you attempt, by cavils, to find fault with the Vedant ?

All the objects are divided into matter and spirit. The world, as the Vedant says, is but matter, the effect of Maya, and God is spirit. Hence, as every material object takes its origin from the universal matter under the superintendence of the Supreme Spirit, and again returns to its origin ; so all individual perceiving existences, called souls, like reflections of the sun, appear differently from each other depending upon the universal perception and again returning to it. We see the flame of one candle appearing differently from that of another, but as soon as its connexion with the candle is over, each is absorbed into the universal heat. In like manner, the individual spirits return to the universal Supreme Spirit, as soon as its connexion with matter is destroyed.

Whether is it more reasonable to say that the intellectual soul has its origin from the universal pure spirit, or that the soul is made of nothing or of insensible matter ? If you say God is omnipotent, he can therefore produce the soul from nothing, you would be involved in difficulties ; one of which is that as God is not a perceptible object, we can establish his existence only from reason and experience : were we to set aside reason and experience in order to admit that the soul or any other



object is made from nothing, there would remain no means to prove the existence of God, much less of his omnipotence. It would strengthen atheistical tenets and destroy all religion, to defy inference from experience.

You find fault with the Nyayu shastru, that it declares, that God is one, and souls are various, but both imperishable ; that space, position and time, as well as atoms are eternal ; and that the power of creation resides in God in a peculiarly united relation. It says also that God allots to the soul the consequences of its good and evil works ; and that he is possessed of immutable will. Hence you maintain that according to these doctrines, God cannot be supposed to be the true cause of the world ; because he, like us, creates things with the aid of materials, such as matter &c. I reply—Every professor of any theistical system, such as the followers of the Nyayu doctrines, and those of Christianity, believe that God is not perishable, and that the soul has no end. The soul, during an endless period, either enjoys the beautitude procured by the acquisition of a knowledge of God, or receives the consequences of works. In like manner, they both believe that it is God that bestows on the soul the consequences of its good and evil actions ; and that the will of God is immutable. If any fault be found with these doctrines, then the system of the Nyayu and of Christianity both must be equally subject to them ; for both systems maintain these doctrines.

Besides, different objects, as the Nyayu says, are of course produced at different times, a circumstance which cannot disprove the eternity of the will of God, who is beyond the limits of time ; but all other objects are effected at certain times as appointed by the eternal will of God.

The relation which subsists between a substance and its quality or action, is called "Sumubayu," and by that relation the act of creating the world resides in the creator, a fact which is acknowledged by almost all theists. No being can be called an agent, unless an action be found in him.

No one can ever conceive any object, whether God or not God, divested of space and time. If you therefore set aside the idea of space and time, you will not be able to prove any thing whatever. Both the followers of the Nyayu and of the Christian religion, believe God to be eternal, that is, he exists from eternity to eternity ; and the very term eternity, implying duration without beginning or end, makes it coeval with God. But if we mean by the eternal existence of God, that he had no beginning in point of time nor will he have an end—this definition is not only applicable to God and to time, but also points out even that the notion of the eternity of God depends on the notion of time.

It is obvious that the material cause of the world is its most minute particles whose destruction is evidently impossible : these are called “ unoos ” or atoms. The immaterial God cannot be supposed the material cause of those particles, nor can Nothing be supposed to be the cause of them : therefore these particles must be eternal, and are only brought into different forms, at different times and places, by the will of God. We see all that originate in volition or voluntary causes, producing effects by means of materials ; and as God is acknowledged by all parties to be the voluntary cause of the world, he therefore is believed to have created the world by means of matter, space, and time. The objection which you make to this system, is, that according to this doctrine the creator of the world and the individual soul, which is also a partial creator, should be considered Gods ; the only difference would be that the former is greater than the latter. I reply—Such objection is not applicable to this system ; because God is an independent agent, and the creator of the whole world ; but the soul is an inferior agent dependent in all its acts on the will of God. No partial resemblance can establish the equality of any being with God ; for Christians and Hindoos ascribe to God and to the soul, will and mercy ; but neither of them supposes that therefore both are Gods, but that one is superior and the other inferior.

You object to the Meemansa, saying, that it declares God to be the wonderful consequences occasioned by the performance of various sacrificial rites consisting of various articles, and of incantations composed of Sunskrit words ; but that among mankind there are various languages and shastrus, and both language and sacrificial articles are but insensible and under the power of man. How can God be the consequences of rites, the product of language and sacrificial articles, both of which are in the power of human beings ? And you again say, that according to the Meemansa doctrines, God is one, and that he is mere rites ; but rites are various. How can the unity of God, according to these sentiments, be maintained ? Especially in those countries where rites are not performed in the Sunskrit language, God cannot exist. I reply, in the first place, the two objections offered by you are inconsistent with each other ; for first you say that God is said by the Meemansa to be the consequences of rites, and again you say that he is declared to be rites themselves. However, the followers of the Meemansa are of two classes : one do not carry their view further than the performance of rites, and they are reckoned among atheists ; another sect profess the existence of God, but they say that the reward or punishment which we experience is the consequence of our works to which God is quite neutral ; and they maintain that to say that God by inducing some men to pray to him or to act virtuously, rewards them, and at the same time neglects others and then punishes them for not having made their supplications to him, (though both are equally his children) amounts to an imputation against God of unjust partiality. Hence it is evident, that according to the doctrines of this sect, the unity of God is well maintained.

In attempting to expose the Patunjul Dhurshun you say that it recommends to man, in lieu of rites to perform yog (or the regulating of breath in a particular mode which is calculated to divert the human mind from all worldly objects :) therefore the objections applicable to the Meemansa are applicable to the Patunjul also.

I reply—It is declared in the Patunjul that through means of yog man may surmount all the distress and grievances of the world whereby he may enjoy beatitude, and that God is pure and beyond the apprehension of the senses and is the superintendent of the universe. I am therefore at a loss to know upon what ground you have placed the Patunjul on a level with the Meemansa.

You find fault with the doctrines of the Sankhyu that it represents the Ruler of nature and Nature as the two halves of a grain of vetch, but on account of the supremacy of the former he is called the invisible God. Hence you infer the duality of the Deity. I reply that the invisible but pervading nature is said by the Sankhyu to be, under the influence of the supreme spirit, the cause of the existence and continuation of the universe. Nature is therefore declared by the Sankhyu to be subordinate to, and dependent on the perceiving spirit, and consequently the spirit is the supreme God.

The commentators in their interpretation of the Ved, though they differ from each other on subordinate subjects yet all agree in ascribing to him neither *form* nor *flesh*, neither *birth* nor *death*.

*The remaining part of the answer is to be inserted in the 2nd number of the Magazine.*

## NUMBER SECOND

OF THE

### BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE.

*Translation of an Extract from a Letter (shewing the unreasonableness of the Hindoo Shastrus,) which appeared in the Sumachar Durpun, a weekly Newspaper printed at the Mission Press, Shreerampore, of date July 14, 1821.*

FIFTHLY.\* In the Poorans and Tuntrus the worship of God as possessing various names, forms and localities is ordered for the benefit of mankind, and the choosing of a spiritual teacher and submitting implicitly to his instructions, are also strictly enjoined ; and they also enjoin the belief that such visible Gods—although having, like us, women and children, although subject to the senses and discharging all bodily functions—are omnipresent. This is very wonderful. In the first place, from this it follows that there are many gods, and that they are subject to the senses. Secondly, the omnipresence of a being possessed of name and form is incredible. If you say his organs are not like ours we acknowledge it. But if he is not possessed of organs composed of the material elements like us, then we must consider him as possessed of organs composed of immaterial elements; but material existences can never know immaterial objects, why then should I acknowledge him to be possessed of names and forms ? Thirdly, that the shastru says that God is possessed of name and form but that mankind cannot see him with their natural eyes. On this ground, how can I acknowledge his forms and names ? Fourthly, in that shastru there is an account of the regard due to the words of a spiritual teacher. If any one is unacquainted with a particular subject how can his instructions

on that subject be of any advantage? There would be some more reason, if any one desirous of knowing the way of God from another, should first ascertain his qualifications and then put confidence in him. Any mode of receiving religious instruction besides this, although it may be agreeable to the popular practise, will be productive of no advantage.

SIXTHLY. According to the doctrine of the Hindoo shastrus, mankind are repeatedly born and repeatedly die assuming through the influence of their works animate or inanimate bodies. According to one sect there is the eternal enjoyment of heaven or endurance of hell after death, and according to another sect there is no future state; and all the inhabitants of this world, except the inhabitants of Hindoostan, receive no consequence of their works and are not subject to works. Which of these is true? and in what way is it possible that they can all alike be consistent with the shastrus?

A learned person has sent from a distant place a letter containing these few questions. His wish is to obtain an answer to each question and it has accordingly been printed: Whoever writes a proper answer may have it printed and every where distributed by sending it to the Shreerampore printing office.

## REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

*Translation of an extract from a reply in defence of the Hindoo Shastrus which was sent to the Editor of the Sumachar durpun, but was not inserted in that paper.*

FIFTHLY. You find fault with the Poorans and Tuntrus that they have established the duty of worshipping God, for the benefit of mankind, as possessing various forms, names and localities; because they order to have a spiritual teacher, and to repose implicit confidence in his words; because they acknowledge the omnipresence of a Being whom yet they allow to be possessed of

form, wife, and children, subject to the senses, and discharging all bodily functions ; and because according to this, in the First place, it appears that there are many gods and that they enjoy the things of this world : that Secondly the omnipresence of a being possessed of name and form is incredible : and that Thirdly those shastrus affirm that God is possessed of name and form ; but mortals cannot perceive him by their bodily eyes—how on this ground can we acknowledge his name and form ?

I answer. The Poorans &c. agreeable to the Vedant represent God in every way as incomprehensible and without form. There is, moreover, this in the Poorans, that lest persons of feeble intellect unable to comprehend God as not subject to the senses and without form, should either pass their life without any religious duties whatsoever or should engage in evil work—to prevent this they have represented God in the form of a man and other animals and as possessed of all those desires with which we are conversant whereby they may have some regard to the Divine Being. Afterwards by diligent endeavours they become qualified for the true knowledge of God : but over and over again the Poorans have carefully affirmed, that they have given this account of the forms of God with a view to the benefit of persons of weak minds, and that in truth, God is without name, form, organs, and sensual enjoyment. “Weak and ignorant persons, unable to know the supreme and indivisible God, think of him as possessed of certain limitations.” (Sentence quoted in the commentary upon the Mandookyu Oopunishud.) “For’ the assistance of the worshippers of the Supreme Being, who is pure intellect, one, without divisibility or body, a fictitious representation is given of his form” (a sentence of Jumudugnee quoted by the Smarttu.) “According to the nature of his qualities, his various forms have been fictitiously given for the benefit of those worshippers who are of slow understanding.” (Muhanirvan Tuntru.)

But it is particularly to be noticed, that there is no end of the Tuntrus. In the same manner the Muhapoorans, Poorans,

Oopupoorans, Ramayuna &c., are very numerous: on this account an excellent rule from the first has been this, that those Poorans and Tuntrus which have commentaries, and those parts which have been quoted by the acknowledged expounders, are received for evidence; otherwise a sentence quoted on the mere authority of the Poorans and Tuntrus is not considered evidence. Those numerous Poorans and Tuntrus which have no commentary and are not quoted by any established expounder may probably be of recent composition. Some Poorans and Tuntrus are received in one province, the natives of other provinces consider them spurious; or rather, what some people in a province acknowledge, others considering it to be only recent, do not receive; therefore those Poorans and Tuntrus only which have been commented upon or quoted by respectable authors are to be regarded. A commonly received rule for ascertaining the authority of any book is this, that whatever book opposes the Ved, is destitute of authority. "All Smrities which are contrary to the Ved, and all atheistical works, are not conducive to future happiness: they dwell in darkness." MUNOO. But the Missionary Gentlemen seldom translate into English the Oopunishuds, the ancient Smrities, the Tuntrus quoted by respectable authors and which have been always regarded. But having translated those works which are opposed to the Veds, which are not quoted by any respectable author, and which have never been regarded as authority, they always represent the Hindoo Religion as very base.

With a view to prove the errors of the Poorans and Tuntrus, you say, that the Poorans represent God as possessed of various names, and forms, as possessed of a wife and children, and as subject to the senses, and to the discharge of bodily functions; from which it follows that there are many gods, that they are subject to sensual pleasure, and that the omnipresence of God cannot be maintained. I therefore humbly ask the Missionary Gentlemen, whether or not they call Jesus Christ, who is possessed of the human form and also the Holy Ghost who is.



possessed of the Dove shape, the very God? (1)\* And whether they do not consider that Jesus Christ, the very God, received impressions by the external organs, eyes &c. and operated by means of the active organs, hands &c. And whether or not they consider him as subject to all the human passions? Was he angry or not? (2) Was his mind afflicted or not? (3) Did he experience any suffering or pain? (4) And did he not eat and drink? (5) Did he not live a long time with his own mother, brothers and relations? (6) Was he not born, (7) and did he not die? (8) And did not the Holy Ghost, who is the very God, in the form of a dove remove from one place to another? (9) And did he not beget Jesus Christ by his intercourse with a woman? (10) If they acknowledge all this, then they cannot find fault with the Poorans, alleging

\* In an 'Abstract' (see our note on page 192) from this number of the Brahmuncial Magazine published in 1827 the following notes (1 to 10) were added.—Ed.

1 "And the Holy-Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him;" Luke Chap. III. v. 22.

2 "And, when he had looked round about on them *with anger*," Mark Chap. III. v. 5.

3 "And being in an *agony*, he prayed more earnestly: and *his sweat* was as it were great *drops of blood* falling down to the ground." Luke Chap. XXII. v. 44.

4 "Jesus *cried* with a loud voice, saying, My God, My God, why hast thou *forsaken me*." Matthew Chap. XXVII. v. 46.

5 "The Son of man is come *eating and drinking*;" Luke Chap. VII. v. 34.

6 "And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and *was subject unto them*:" Luke Chap. II. v. 51.

7 "When Jesus *was born* in Bethlehem &c." Matthew Chap. II. v. 1.

8 "And they shall scourge him and put him *to death*." Luke Chap. XVIII. v. 33.

9 Luke, Chap. III. v. 22.

10 "The Holy-Ghost *shall come* upon thee &c." Luke Chap. I. v. 35. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she *was found with child of the Holy-Ghost*." Matthew Chap. I. v. 18.

that in them the names and the forms of God are established, and that according to them God must be considered as subject to the senses, and as possessing senses and organs, and that God must be considered as having a wife and child, and as not possessed of omnipresence on account of his having a form. Because all these errors *viz.* the plurality of gods, their sensual indulgence and their locality are applicable to themselves in a complete degree. To say that every thing however contrary to the laws of nature is possible with God, will equally afford a pretence to Missionaries and Hindoos in support of their respective incarnations. The aged Vyas has spoken truth in the Muhabharut: "O king! a person sees the faults of another although they are like the grains of mustard seed, but although his own faults are big as the Bel fruit looking at them he cannot perceive them." Moreover the Poorans say that the names, forms and sensual indulgence of God which we have mentioned, are fictitious; and we have so spoken with a view to engage the minds of persons of weak understanding; but the Missionary Gentlemen say that the account which is given in the Bible of the names, forms and sensual indulgence of God is real. Therefore the plurality of gods, their locality and subjection to sensual indulgence, are faults to be found in a real sense, only in the system of the Missionary Gentlemen.

Secondly, the Hindoo Poorans and Tuntrus, in which the fictitious account is given, are subordinate to the Ved, but are not the very Ved itself: when they disagree with the Ved their authority is not regarded. "When the Ved and the Poorans disagree, the Ved must be regarded; pious men will always explain the Pooran &c., in agreement with what the Ved declares." (Quotation by the Smarttu.) But the Missionary Gentlemen consider the Bible as their Ved, and in explaining it have in this manner dishonoured God in a real sense. A real error, therefore, and an excess of error is discovered in their own system.

You have moreover asked, what advantage can be derived from the instructions of a spiritual teacher, who is himself

ignorant of what he professes to teach? What advantage is there in adopting a spiritual teacher according to the popular practice in this country? I reply, this objection is not at all applicable to the Hindoo shastru, because the shastru enjoins that such a spiritual teacher must be chosen as is acquainted with what he teaches, but in choosing any other sort of spiritual teacher no spiritual benefit is obtained for the purpose of Divine Knowledge. "He, taking in his hand the sacrificial wood, must approach to a spiritual teacher who is well read in the Veds and devoted to the faith of Bruhmu." (Moonduk Ved.) "There are many spiritual teachers who take the wealth of their disciples; but a spiritual teacher who removes the errors of his disciples, O! Goddess, is difficult to be obtained" (Tuntru.) The definition of a spiritual teacher "He is subdued in the members of his body and affections of his mind, of honourable birth &c." (Quotation by Krishnanund).

You say at the end, that according to one Hindoo shastru, by means of works the body repeatedly becomes animate or inanimate; that according to another sect after leaving the body there is either the eternal enjoyment of heaven or the eternal endurance of hell; and that according to another sect there is no future state. I answer,—It is not contained in any part of the Hindoo shastru that there is no future state: this is an atheistical tenet. But it is true that the shastru says, that even in this world, the consequences both of some good and some evil works are experienced, or God after death inflicts the consequences of the sins and holiness of some in hell and heaven, or the Supreme Ruler bestows the consequences of the sins and holiness of others, by giving them other bodies either animate or inanimate. In this, what mutual disagreement appears such as you have attempted to establish? According to the Christian doctrine, likewise, there are various kinds of consequences attached to different actions; God even in this world gives the punishment of sins and rewards for holiness, as in the case of the Jews. It is written in the Bible, that even in this world

God punished their sins and rewarded their holiness ; moreover Jesus Christ himself has said, that by giving alms openly, fruit will be obtained only in this world;\* and it is also written in the Bible that some have enjoyed good and suffered evil after death. By saying so, no inconsistency appears in the Bible ; because God is the rewarder, and he gives some the consequences of their deeds in this world, others in the next. Christians all allow, that after the destruction of the body, God, at the time of judgment, gives a body to the spirit, and bestows on this corporeal spirit the consequences of its good and evil works. If they believe that contrary to the Laws of Nature, God can give a body to the spirit and make it receive the consequences of its works, then why should they express surprise, if, in consistency with these Laws, God shall, by having given a body, bestow on the spirit in this world the consequences of its works? You have said that all the inhabitants of the world except those of Hindoostan, receive no consequences of their works. Such a sentiment is not contained in any part of their shastru. But you also say that all the other inhabitants of the world have no works ; the meaning of which is that they have no rites prescribed by the Ved ; which is indeed correct : therefore the shastru is in every respect perfectly consistent. You will consider the same here of the Durshuns ; that is, all the Durshuns call God incomprehensible ; and above all, in considering the nature of other objects, those who variously understood the meaning of the Ved expressed themselves differently. In the same manner although the commentators on the Bible in some parts disagree, this is no fault of the Bible and no diminution of the reputation of the Commentators.

I have now written what I intended, respecting the errors which, as contrary to reason, you have stated to be in the Hindoo shastru. The Reverend Missionaries are in Calcutta, Shreerampore and various other places. What is afterwards written, is intended to ascertain how far *their* doctrines are agreeable to reason.

\* Matthew, chap. VI. v. 2. (Note in the third edition.—ED.)

They call Jesus Christ the Son of God and the very God :—  
How can the Son be the very Father ?

They sometimes call Jesus Christ the Son of man, and yet say no man was his Father.

They say that God is one, and yet say that the Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Ghost is God.

They say that God must be worshipped in spirit, and yet they worship Jesus Christ as very God, although he is possessed of a material body.

They say that the Son is of the same essence and existence as the Father, and they also say that the Son is equal to the Father. But how can equality subsist except between objects possessed of different essences and existences ?

I shall be much obliged by answers to these enquiries.

SHIVUPRUSAD SURMA.

## NUMBER THIRD

OF THE

## BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE\*.

In the Friend of India No. 38 a reply has been made in English to the 2nd number of the Brahmuncial Magazine composed both in English and Bengali and published a few weeks ago. As the controversy in question is intended by both parties chiefly for the benefit of the Hindoo community and secondarily

\* The first three numbers of the Brahmuncial Magazine were published in 1821, and the fourth in 1823, each being a separate tract. In the second edition of the first three numbers they were put together as we have reprinted them here. (See our note in page 169). In the year 1827 another edition of the Magazine was published, the 2nd and 4th numbers being published with some portion of the original left out and some portions revised, under the title of Extracts from the Brahmuncial Magazine &c.,

for the use of Europeans; I feel much disappointed in my expectation of being favoured by the Editor or his colleagues with a reply in English and Bengali to insert in the next number of my Magazine. I however must receive it as it is, and beg to be allowed to make a few remarks on the reply.

As to my first question proposed in the Magazine in the following words, "They call Jesus Christ the son of God and the very God—how can the son be the very father?," the Editor denies the accuracy of the information on which I found this question, and firmly asserts that "Bible no where says that the son is the father." I therefore deem it necessary to shew my reason for the above query, leaving it to the public to pronounce on the justifiableness of it, either in their conversation or religious publications. Christian teachers profess that God is one, and that Jesus Christ is the son of God, and the very God. Hence I naturally concluded that they believe the son to be the

and the 3rd number in full. In this (third) edition of the 3rd Number we find the following introduction by Chundru Shekhur Dev.—

#### "ADVERTISEMENT.

In the following pages will be found a new edition of the third number of the Brahmunical Magazine, as a reply to an article published in "the Friend of India" No. 38, a well known Missionary Periodical issued from Shreerampoor in Bengal. To my great surprise the above number has still (for about 5 years) remained unanswered, notwithstanding the subject has often been brought to the notice of the Missionary Gentlemen during that period, through means of the public papers, although the Missionaries themselves were the aggressors, having first provoked the controversy.

I, in this instance, content myself with a single quotation from the Editor of the Brahmunical Magazine, shewing the line of conduct which the Missionary Gentlemen ought to have pursued; 'I was influenced by the conviction, that persons, who travel to a distant country for the purpose of overturning the opinions of its inhabitants and introducing their own peculiar sentiments, ought to be prepared to demonstrate that the latter are more reasonable than the former.'

CHUNDRU-SHEKHUR DEV."

*Calcutta 1827.*

father, and consequently questioned the reasonableness of such a doctrine. For when a person affirms that such a one, say James, is one, and that John is his son, and again says that John is actually James, we should naturally conclude that he means that John the son is James the father, and be at liberty to ask how can John the son be James the father? But as the Editor, a leading minister of that religion, declares that "the Bible nowhere says that the son is the father, but says that the son is equal to the father in nature and essence" and "distinct in person" &c. and recommends me to reflect on mankind, of whom "every son, who has not the same human nature with his father, must be a monster." It would be too much boldness on my part to give preference to my apprehension of the meaning of the Bible over that of the Editor. I would therefore have admitted (as suggested by the Editor) that the son of God is God, on the analogy and in the sense that the son of a man is a man, had I not been compelled by his very suggestion to reject entirely his other still more important assertion, that is, the coeval existence of the son with the father. For, the belief of the nature of the son of man being the same as that of the father, though it justifies the idea of the son of God being God, is utterly repugnant to the possibility of the son being coeval with his father. It is evident that if a son of man be supposed coeval with his father, he must be considered some thing more extraordinary than a monster!

It is believed by all religious sects, that when God reveals his will or law to the human race, he reveals it through their language in its common acceptation. I beg, therefore, of the Editor, to favour me with a direct reply to the following question.—Do the Missionary Gentlemen take the word "God" as a proper name or as a common one, all nouns being divided into two kinds, common and proper? In the former case, that is, if they consider the term "God" appropriated to one individual existence as every other proper name is, they must relinquish the idea of the son of God being the very God. How can we

think the son of John or James to be John or James, or coeval with John or James? And in the latter case, that is, if they receive the term "God" as a common name, they may maintain the opinion that the son of God is God, in the same way as the son of a man is man, which, as the Editor says, "must necessarily be the case," but they, in this case, cannot be justified in professing a belief in the equal duration of the son with the father; for *every son, whatever may be his nature, must have existence originating subsequently to that of his own Father.* The only difference between these two common nouns "God" and "man" would be, that the latter includes a great many individuals under it and the former only three distinct persons, though of superior power and nature. But no smallness of the number or mightiness of power of persons under one common name, can exclude it from being classed as a general noun; for it is well established by the observers of nature that the number of individuals comprised under the term "mankind" is much less, and their nature is far more mighty, than the living embryos in the milt of a single cod-fish—a circumstance which does not make man less a genus than the term fish.

We see individuals under one term of mankind, though they are distinct in person, yet one in nature, as being all men. In like manner three beings under one godhead, according to the Editor, though they are distinct in person are yet, I infer, considered by him one in nature as gods,—god the Father, god the Son, and god the Holy-ghost. Is this the unity of God which the Editor professes? Can this doctrine justify him in ridiculing Hindoo polytheism, because many of them say, that under one Godhead there are more than three beings distinct in person but one in nature?

As to my third question "they say God is one, and yet say that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy-Ghost is God", the Editor admits the fact, as he says, that "the Bible ascribes the same divine nature and perfections to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and yet declares that though dis-



tinct in person they are one in nature and attributes," that "it (the Bible) teaches men to worship each of them as God," and that "the Father, Son and Holy-Ghost are described in Scripture as equally giving grace and peace to men, as pardoning sin and leading men into the paths of righteousness." But instead of shewing the reasonableness of the idea of three distinct gods being one God, as requested, he confesses the total inconsistency of this doctrine with reason and makes the Bible responsible for it, saying "But the Bible, while it fully reveals these facts, still forbears to inform us how the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit exist and form the triune God"; and adds, "nor, had it informed us, are we certain that we should have comprehended it." The Editor or his colleagues ought to have taken into consideration such unreasonableness attaching to the most important of all their doctrines before they had published in the "Sumachar-Durpun" the letter accusing the Vedant and the rest of the Hindoo Shastrus of want of reason—a circumstance which might have saved the Editor the reluctant avowal of the unreasonableness of the foundation of his own system of faith. The Editor however attempts to procure belief for this doctrine so palpably contrary to reason and experience, under the plea that "there are many things which pass around and within us, of the manner of which we can form no just idea, though no one doubts their truth. We know not how plants and trees draw matter from the earth and transform it into the leaves, flowers, and fruits, although no one questions the fact;—nor how mind so acts upon matter as to enable a man at will to raise his hand to his head, and with it to perform the hardest labour. Until we comprehend the manner in which these operations on matter are effected, which constantly pass around and within us, we have little reason to complain, because the triune God has not condescended to inform us of the precise mode in which his infinite and glorious nature exists and acts." How is it possible for the Editor, or for any one possessed of common sense, not to perceive the gross error of drawing an

analogy from things around and within us, to the 'three distinct persons of the God-head' in one existence, which so far from being around or within us, exist only in the imagination of the Missionaries.\*

Here the growth of a tree and its producing leaves and flowers, as well as the operation of mind on matter, being around and within us, are commonly perceptible by all men whether Christians or not Christians, a denial of which is utterly impossible for one who is possessed of the senses. It is very true that the exact manner in which plants grow or the mind operates, and the precise principles of nature which act upon them, are not thoroughly understood. But all that these facts amount to is, that things around or within us, whether visible or demonstrated by visible facts, compel conviction. Do the three distinct persons of the Godhead in unity exist like growing trees or bodies joined to mind? Are they phenomena commonly perceptible alike by Christians and not Christians? Or are they like mountains of ice in northern countries, which, though they are not seen or felt by us, yet are reported to us by eye-witnesses, without any contradiction from others who have also passed the places where they are said to exist, and where they are liable to be seen by any one, that we should be compelled to believe the existence of the triune God like that of growing trees, operating minds, or mountains of ice, though we cannot understand them; or rather though we find them exactly contrary to what we have understood? Christians may perhaps consider the Trinity as perceptible by them through the force of early instructions, in the same manner as the followers of the Tuntru doctrines among Hindoos in Bengal consider God as consisting of five distinct persons and yet as one God, and as the generality of modern Hindoos esteem numerous incarnations under one Godhead almost as an experienced fact from their early habits. How can Christians who in general justly pride

\* 'The Missionaries' is the reading of the third edition, in the first two editions it was 'Christians.'

themselves on their cultivated understanding, admit such an analogy or justify any one in misleading others with such sophistries? The only excuse which I feel inclined to make for them, and perhaps a true one, is, that the enlightened amongst them, like several of the Greek and Roman philosophers, yield, through policy, to the vulgar opinions, though fully sensible of the unjustifiableness of them. I am however sorry to observe that the minds of a great number of Christians are so biassed in favour of the doctrine of the Trinity from the strong impression made on them by education in their youth, that they can readily defy the suggestions of the senses, reason, and experience in oppositon to this doctrine. They accuse Brahmunical priests of having an unjust ascendancy over their pupils, while they forget how greatly Christians are influenced by their ministers so as to overlook the error of such an analogy as the above, and others of a similar nature. ॥

The Editor has first declared that "the Bible forbears to inform us how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit exist" &c. "the triune God has not descended to inform us of the precise mode in which his infinite and glorious nature exists and acts";—nevertheless as he particularizes the mode of their existence, and actions, separately and distinctly from the authority of the Bible, stating that "the Son who has existed with the Father from eternity has created heaven and earth;" that "from his infinite pity to sinful men he condescended to *lay aside his glory for a season*;" that "taking on himself *the form of a servant* he might worship and obey the father as his God;" that "he prayed his father to glorify him only with his own glory which he had with his father before the foundation of the world and which for a season he had laid aside;" that "he was permitted to ascend up where he was before;" and that lastly "he was seated at the right-hand of the Majesty on high" who "gave him as mediator all power in heaven and earth;" and that "God the Spirit was also pleased to testify to men his approbation of the Son's becoming incarnate, by visibly descending

upon him in the form of a dove." Notwithstanding their different locations, different actions, and distinct existences, the Editor represents them as one, and also demands of the rest of the world a belief in their unity. Is it possible even to conceive for a moment the identity between three Beings, one of them in heaven expressing his pleasure at the conduct of the second, who at the same time on the earth was performing religious rites, and the third of them then residing between heaven and earth descending on the second at the will of the first. If the difference of bodies and situations as well as of actions and employments, be not sufficient to set aside the idea of the identity and real unity of persons, there would be no means of distinguishing one person from another, and no criterion would be left for considering a tree different from a rock or a bird from a man. Is this the doctrine which the Editor ascribes to God? And can any book, which contains an idea that defies the use of the senses, be considered worthy to be ascribed to that Being who has endued the human race with senses and understanding for their use and guidance? As long as men have the use of their senses and faculties, (unless sunk in early prejudices) they never can be excepted to be deluded by any circumlocutions founded upon circumstances not only beyond understanding but also contrary to experience and to the evidence of the senses. God the Son is declared by the Editor to have *laid aside his glory* for a season, and to have prayed his father to give him the same glory, and also to have taken the *form of a servant*. Is it consistent with the nature of the *immutable God* to *lay aside* any part of his condition and to *pray for it* again? Is it conformable to the nature of the *Supreme Ruler* of the universe to *take the form of a servant*, though only for a season? Is this the true idea of God which the Editor maintains? Even idolators among Hindoos have more plausible excuses for their polytheism. I shall be obliged, if the Editor can shew that the polytheistical doctrines maintained by Hindoos are, in any degree, more unreasonable than his own. If not, he will not, I trust, endeavour in future to introduce among them

one set of polytheistical sentiments as a substitute for another set; *both of them being equally and solely* protected by the *shield of mystery*.

The Editor acknowledges the fact of God's appearing in the shape of a Dove to testify the appointment of God the Son, stating, that "when God renders himself visible to man, it must be by appearing in some form." But I wonder how after such an acknowledgment the Editor can ridicule the idea of God's appearing in the shape of a fish or cow, which is entertained by the Pouranik\* Hindoos? Is not a fish as innocent as a dove? Is not a cow more useful than a pigeon?

All that I said of the Holy-Ghost is as follows. "Did not the Holy-Ghost, who is very God, in the form of a dove remove from one place to another? and did he not beget Jesus Christ by his divine intercourse with a woman?"—alluding in the former question to his descent on Jesus Christ, when baptized, in the shape of a dove, and in the latter to his having begot Christ by a woman not married to him, as is evident from their Scriptures: "She was found with child of the Holy-Ghost":† "The Holy-Ghost shall come upon thee."‡ Both of these circumstances is solemnly acknowledged by the Editor. But whence or how the Editor infers again my misrepresentation of the fact, and my attempt to ridicule the doctrine, I am unable to discover.

As to my fourth question viz. "They say that God must be worshipped in spirit and yet they worship Jesus Christ as very God, although he is possessed of a material body;" the Editor has given an evasive answer; for he says, "Christians worship Jesus Christ and not his body separately from him." I never charged Christians in my question with worshipping the body of Jesus Christ separately from himself, that the Editor could be justified in denying Christians' having worshipped him and not his body. The Editor in fact confesses their adoration

\* Mythologist or mythological.—† Matthew, chap. I. v. 18.—‡ Luke, chap. I. v. 35,—(Notes of the third edition.—Ed.)

of Jesus Christ as the very God in the material form; nevertheless he attempts to maintain that they worship God in spirit. If we admit that the worship of spirit possessed of material body is worship in spirit, we must not any longer impute idolatry to any religious sect, for none of them adore mere matter unconnected with spirit. Did the Greeks and Romans worship the bodies of Jupiter and Juno and their other supposed gods separately from their respective spirits? Are not the miraculus works ascribed by them to these gods, proofs of their viewing them as spirits connected with the body? Do the idolaters among Hindoos worship the assumed forms of their incarnations divested of their spirit? Nothing of the kind! Even in worshipping idols Hindoos do not consider them objects of worship until they have performed Pranprutistha or communication of divine life. According to the definition given by the Editor, none of them can be supposed idolaters, because they never worship the body separately from the spirit! But in fact any worship through either an artificial form or imaginary material representation is nothing but idolatry.

Moreover the Editor says that "the Father, Son and Holy-Ghost are also described in scripture, as equally giving grace and peace to man, as pardoning sin and leading men in the paths of righteousness, which things omniscience, omnipotence, infinite love and mercy can alone perform." I do not know any polytheistical system more clear than this description of the Editor as declaring three Beings equally omniscient, omnipotent, and possessed of infinite mercy. I however beg to ask, whether the omnipotence, omniscience, and infinite mercy of one person is sufficient or not to arrange the universal system and preserve its harmony? If so, an admission of the omnipotence and omniscience of the second and the third is superfluous and absurd; but if not sufficient, why should we stop at the number three and not carry on the numeration until the number of omnipotent Beings becomes at least equal to that of the heavenly bodies, ascribing to each the management of every Globe. From

the skill which Europeans generally display in conducting political affairs and effecting mechanical inventions, foreigners very often conclude that their religious doctrines would be equally reasonable ; but as soon as any one of them is made acquainted with such doctrines as are professed by the Editor and by a great number of his countrymen,\* he will firmly believe that religious truth has no connection with political success.

My fifth question was, "How can equality subsist except between objects possessed of different essences and existences?" But the Editor repeats only a part of it *i.e.* How the son can be equal with the father, when he does possess the same nature, and then declares the question unintelligible. I never meant the impossibility of equality between persons or things that possess the same nature, as we find often equality in some property subsisting between man and man, though possessing the same nature; but as no equality can subsist except between things of different *existences*, and the professed belief of the Missionary Gentlemen was that the Son is the same in existence as well as in nature with the father, I took the liberty to ask how the son can be equal with the father, when he is supposed to be possessed of the same *nature* and *existence*? Unless they deny to the Son the same existence with the Father, they cannot, I think maintain his equality with the Father. I, therefore, presume, my question is perfectly intelligible.

As to my second remark, viz. "they sometimes call Jesus Christ the son of man, and yet say no man was his Father", the Editor makes the following reply,—“While, thus incarnate, he in many ways unavoidably displayed his divine nature ; but being born of a woman and in all things like unto us as to his human nature, yet without sin, he condescended to call himself the Son of man, although no man was his Father.” I wonder that the Editor, who on one hand attempts so warmly

\* “With the Histories of the Ancient Greeks and Romans,” is the reading of the third edition for “by a great number of his countrymen.”—ED.

to prove the deity and, inspiration of Jesus Christ, on the other hand accuses the same being of having declared, what was totally contrary to the fact, saying, that he condescended to call himself *the Son of man, although no man was his Father.* I also feel surprized at the inconsistency of the Editor, who, while justifying the above statement respecting his Lord, charges the Hindoo Pouraniks with falsity, because the Poorans, in instructing men of weak understanding, have made allegorical representations of God, though they repeatedly confess the allegorical nature of their instructions and explain their motives for introducing them. Besides, he imputes false representation to one of the commentators of the Ved, and that only in his instructing the ignorant in a parabolical manner, and from this single circumstance he condemns "the whole of the Hindoo System."

In the very reply of the Editor, I find the phrase "at the right hand of God" quoted by the Editor as a scriptural expression. I therefore beg to know whether the phrase "the right hand of God" implies a true representation of God, or not? I find the following expressions even within the three first chapters of the Bible: "he (God) rested on the seventh day from all his work." "The Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day;" "And (God) said unto him (Adam) where art thou?" Did Moses mean by the term "rested" that God ceased to act from fatigue, and attempt to prove the mutableness of God? Did he mean by the phrase "God walked in the cool of the day" that he moved by means of legs, like men in general, in the cool of the day to avoid the heat of the weather? Or did he mean by the question "where art thou?" to imply the previous ignorance of the omniscient God? If so, Moses had strange ideas of Jehovah, and but little better than those maintained by his contemporary heathens. I am however inclined to think that Moses made use of these expressions conformably to the understanding of the ignorant Jews of his days, without subjecting himself to the charge of falsehood; and this, I am informed by Christians,



was the opinion of ancient teachers called Fathers of the Church, as well as of many modern learned Christians.

The Editor expresses his joy at "perceiving that the natives have begun to arouse themselves from that state of morbid apathy and insensibility which is a certain symptom of moral death and of universal corruption of manners &c." I cannot help feeling compassion for his total want of knowledge of the literary employment and domestic conduct of the native community at large, notwithstanding his long residence in India. During only a few years past, hundreds of works on different subjects, such as Theology, Law, Logic, Grammar, and Astronomy, have been written by the natives of Bengal alone. I do not wonder that they have not reached the knowledge of the Editor, who, in common with almost all his colleagues, has shut his eyes against any thing that might do the smallest credit to the natives. As to the "moral death" ascribed to them by the Editor, I might easily draw a comparison between the domestic conduct of the natives and that of the inhabitants of Europe, to shew where the grossest deficiency lies ; but as such a dispute is entirely foreign to the present controversy, I restrain myself from so disagreeable a subject, under the apprehension that it might excite general displeasure.

As to the abusive terms made use of by the Editor, such as "Father of lies alone to whom it (Hindooism) evidently owes its origin" "Impure fables of his false Gods" "Pretended Gods of Hindoos;" &c. common decency prevents me from making use of similar terms in return. We must recollect that we have engaged in solemn religious controversy and not in retorting abuse against each other.

I conclude this reply with expressing my hope that the Editor on noticing it will arrange his observations methodically, giving an answer to each of my five questions in succession, that the public may judge with facility of the arguments employed on both sides.

**THE**  
**BRAHMUNICAL MAGAZINE**

**OR**  
**THE MISSIONARY AND THE BRAHMUN.**

**TO BE CONTINUED OCCASIONALLY.**

**No. IV.**

**CALCUTTA :**

**1823.**



## PREFACE.

Notwithstanding my humble suggestions in the third number of this Magazine, against the use of offensive expressions in religious controversy, I find, to my great surprize and concern, in a small tract lately issued from one of the Missionary Presses and distributed by Missionary Gentlemen, direct charges of *atheism* made against the doctrines of the Veds, and undeserved reflections on us as their followers. This has induced me to publish, after an interval of two years, a fourth number of the Brahmunical Magazine.

In accordance with the mild and liberal spirit of universal toleration, which is well known to be a fundamental principle of Hindooism, I am far from wishing to oppose any system of religion, much less Christianity ; and my regard for the feelings of its professors would restrain me from thus exposing its errors, were they not forced upon my notice by the indiscreet assaults still made by Christian writers on the Hindoo religion. But when they scruple not to wound the feelings of a Hindoo, by attacking the most ancient and sacred oracles of his faith, the inspired Veds, which have been revered from generation to generation, for time immemorial, should he submit to such wanton aggression, without endeavouring to convince these Gentlemen, that in the language of their own Scripture they “strain at a gnat and swallow a camel” (Matth. XXIII. 24)? Hence they may at least learn *from experience* a lesson of *Charity*, which they are ready enough to inculcate upon others, overlooking, at the same time, the precept given by their God: “Do unto others as you would wish to be done by,” implying, that if you wish others to treat your religion respectfully, you should not throw offensive reflections upon the religion of others.

I shall still be extremely glad to enter upon a minute in-

vestigation of the comparative merits of our respective religions, more especially if the Christian writers carry on the controversy in moderate and decorous language, worthy of literary characters and sincere inquirers after truth.

In 1827 the Second Chapter of this number was republished with the following introduction.—

“ In the following pages there will be found an extract, on the doctrine of the trinity and that of the atonement, from the *Brahmunical Magazine* No. 4 published in the year 1823 by Shivuprusad Surma, in reply to the attacks made by the Christian Missionaries at Shreerampoor on the religion of Brahmuns. The readers will form their own judgment of the reasoning therein employed.

*Calcutta 1827.”*

—ED.

## CHAPTER 1.

### A REPLY

*To certain Queries directed against the Vedant.*

A few queries written in the Bengalee language, having again issued from the Mission Press, Sreerampore, directed against the Vedant system of religion, and a Missionary Gentleman having brought these queries to the notice of our friend, Rammohun Roy, I naturally expected that the latter would publish a reply.

Disappointed in my expectation, and much hurt at the stigma thrown upon the religion which I profess, following the divine guidance of the Veds and the dictates of pure reason, I deem it incumbent upon me to defend what I believe to be true, against so unprovoked an aggression.

In his prefatory lines, the author says, that from reading the translation of the Vedant by Rammohun Roy, he understands that the Veds declare a knowledge of God to be unattainable by man, and therefore he begs that Rammohun Roy will cease to impart their doctrines until he shall acquire a knowledge of the Deity from some other religious source.

This author, in common with a great number of his fellow-believers, not resting contented with the perversion and misrepresentation of the purport of his own Bible, has been zealously endeavouring to misquote the writings, revered by others as sacred authority, for the purpose of exposing them to ridicule. To prove this assertion I quote here the very first passage of the translation of the abridgement of the Vedant by Rammohun Roy, to which the Querist refers in his prefatory lines.—viz.

“The illustrious Vyas in his celebrated work, the Vedant, insinuates in the first text, that it is absolutely necessary for mankind to acquire knowledge respecting the Supreme Being ;

“but he found from the following passages of the Veds that  
 “this inquiry is *limited to very narrow bounds*.—Vyas also,  
 “from the result of various arguments coinciding with the  
 “Ved, found that an *accurate and positive* knowledge of the Su-  
 “preme Being, is not within the boundary of comprehension,  
 “*i. e. what and how* the Supreme Being is, cannot be *definitely*  
 “ascertained. He has, therefore, in the second text, *explained*  
 “the Supreme Being by his *effects and works*, without attempt-  
 “ing to *define his essence*.”

Now my readers will plainly perceive in the above quotation, that a perfect knowledge respecting the nature and essence of the Deity is declared in the Vedant “to be unattainable;” while a knowledge of his existence through “his effects and works” is duly revealed by the Ved and consequently is zealously studied and imparted by us. We find in the Christian Scriptures declarations to the same purport. Psalm CXLV. “Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is *unsearchable*” Job XXXVI. 26. “God is great and we *know him not*: *neither* can the number of his years *be searched out*.” Will the author of these queries justify any one in following his example, by suggesting to the Missionary Gentlemen not to inculcate Christian doctrines; on the ground that the Scriptures declare a knowledge of God and the number of the years of his existence *unsearchable*? I think he will not listen to such a suggestion, and will perhaps say in defence of the Missionaries, that since the real nature of God is said in Scripture to be *unsearchable*, they have never attempted to preach the divine nature and essence. If such be their defence, how could prejudice completely shut the eyes of this Interrogator against the plain declaration found in the translation of the Vedant both in Bengalee and English, which he says he has read: *viz.* “He (Vyas) has, therefore, in the “second text, explained the Supreme Being by his *effects* and “*works* without attempting to define his essence.”

In answer to his first query, *i. e.* “Did one God create, the

world or not ? ” I refer him to the next passage and to a subsequent passage of the same translation of the Vedant, viz. “*He, by whom the birth, existence, and annihilation of the world is regulated, is the Supreme Being.*” “*All the Veds prove nothing but the unity of the Supreme Being.*” “*God is indeed one and has no second.*” These passages will, I hope, be sufficient to convince the Querist, that the doctrine of the *unity* of God is an essential principle of the Vedant system, however unwelcome it may be to him, as opposing his favorite notion of three Gods, or three Persons equally powerful under an *abstract idea* of *Godhead*.

In reply to his second query (i. e. “Does God preserve this world or not ? and is his word our rule or not ?”) consisting of two questions, I have merely to quote the following passages of the same translation of the Vedant, which as they apply to each severally, I place under two separate heads. 1st. “*He from whom the universal world proceeds, who is the support of the world, and he, whose work is the universe, is the Supreme Being.*” “*Who is the almighty and the sole regulator of the universe.*” 2nd. “*God is declared to be the cause of all the Veds.*” “*Rules and rites (are) prescribed by the Ved.*” The former quotations prove that God is the sole support of the world ; and the latter declare that the Ved is the law of God, revealed and introduced for our rule and guidance.

As queries 3rd, 4th, and 5th, are in fact one query, I repeat them as they stand and make one reply : “Is God with or without attributes ? If God is destitute of all attributes, then how can a rule of right and wrong be recognized ? If you say that “God is destitute of all attributes, then what is the difference “between your principles and those of an atheist?” I reply: The Vedant, does not ascribe to God any power or attribute *according to the human notion* of properties or modes being attached or subordinate to their substance, such as the faculty of vision, or of wisdom, compassion, anger &c. in rational animals. Because these properties are sometimes found among the human race



in full operation, and again ceasing to operate, as if they were quite extinct ; because the power of one of these attributes is often impeded by the operation of another ; and because the object in which they exist, depends upon special members of the body, such as the eyes, brain, heart &c. for the exercise of vision, wisdom, compassion &c.

In consideration of the incompatibility of such defects with the perfection of the divine nature, the Vedant declares the very identity of God to be the substitute of the perfection of all the attributes necessary for the creation and support of the universe, and for introducing revelation among men, without representing these attributes as separate properties, depended upon by the deity, in creating and ruling the world. Hence the Vedant confesses the impossibility of any perfect knowledge of the Divine nature, although to adapt itself to the understanding of beginners in the study of theology, it often ascribes to God such attributes as are held excellent among the human species ; as truth, mercy, justice, &c. See again the same translation. "The Ved having at first explained the Supreme Being by "different epithets, begins with the word *Uthu* or *now*, and "declares, that all descriptions which have been used to describe "the Supreme Being are imperfect (ideal), because he (the "Divine Being) by no means can be described."

Now, unbiassed readers will judge, which of these two opinions is the more consistent with reason and divine revelation, to wit, the denying of properties to God according to the human notion of qualities in objects, as done by the Vedant ; or the equalising of the number of Gods, or persons under a Godhead, with the number of the supposed principal qualities belonging to the deity, (namely Creation, Redemption and Sanctification) as practised by the Querist and his fellow-believers, who have provided themselves with a God the Father, for the work of creation, a God the Son, for redemption, and a God the Holy-Ghost, for sanctification.

I do not wonder, that our religious principles are compared

with those of atheists, by one, whose ideas of the divine nature are so gross, that he can consider God, as having been born\* and circumcised †, as having grown‡ and been subject to parental authority,§ as eating and drinking,|| and even as dying¶ and as having been totally annihilated (though for three days only, the period intervening from the crucifixion of Christ to his resurrection,) ; nor can it give me any concern, if a person, labouring under such extravagant fancies, should, at the same time, insinuate atheism against us, since he must thereby only expose himself to the derision of the discerning Public.

As to his sixth and seventh queries, viz. "Do not wicked actions proceed in this world from the depravity of mankind?" 7th. "By what penance can that guilt be expiated, which men contract by the practice of wickedness?" I beg to observe, that a desire of indulging the appetites and of gratifying the passions is, by nature, common to man with the other animals. But the Veds, coinciding with the natural desire of social intercourse implanted in the human constitution, as the original cause of sympathy\*\* with others, require of men to moderate those appetites and regulate those passions, in a manner calculated to preserve the peace and comfort of Society, and secure their future happiness ; so that mankind may maintain their superiority over the rest of the animal creation, and benefit by one another. For each person to indulge without restraint all the appetites and passions, would be destructive of the harmony of Society, which mankind is naturally desirous to preserve. These sentiments are contained in the following passages of the same translation of the Vedant, viz. "A command "over our passions and over the external senses of the body, "and good acts, are declared by the Ved to be indispensable "in the mind's approximation to God. They should, therefore, \* Luke II. 7 † Luke II. 21. ‡ Luke II. 40. § Luke II. 51. || Matth XI. 19. ¶ Mark XIV. 34.

•• Even birds and beasts sympathise with their associates of the opposite sex and with their young, in proportion to the extent of their desire for social enjoyment.

"be strictly taken care of, and attended to, both previously and "subsequently to such approximation to the Supreme Being."

In the constant internal struggles between this desire of indulgence, always working powerfully upon the mind, and the social inclination, displayed in various modes, according to the difference of circumstances, of habits, and of education, some yield often to the passions. In that case the only means of attaining an ultimate victory over them is, sincere repentance and solemn meditation, which occasion mental disquiet and anxiety forming the punishment of sin; and which are calculated to prevent future surrenders to the passions on similar occasions. The sin which mankind contract against God, by the practice of wickedness, is believed by us to be expiated by these penances, and not, as supposed by the Querist, by the blood of a son of man or son of God, who never participated in our transgressions.

His last query is, "Will mankind at last be certainly raised and judged? and will they suffer or enjoy according to their works or not?" In reply to which I beg to observe, that the Vedant does not confine the reward or punishment of good or evil works to the state after death, much less to a particular day of judgment; but it reveals positively, that a man suffers or enjoys, according to his evil or good deeds, frequently even in this world,—a doctrine which is not, I think, at variance with the first part of the Christian Bible. See the above translation. "From devotion to God *all* the desired consequences proceed" (meaning of course in this world also.) "He, who has no faith "in the Supreme Being, is rendered subject to these gods" (properly speaking *grand objects*.)

In conclusion, he makes some other insinuations against the Vedant; one of which is, that it declares the mind to be God; and consequently that those who adhere to this religion, must follow their natural propensities, and the suggestions of their own minds merely, not the revealed authority of God. I therefore quote these lines found in that very translation, from which

the querist draws this conclusion, and leave the public to judge, whether he is not entirely 'deprived, even of common sense, by rooted religious prejudice,' in examining the writings of others, that are not persuaded to think exactly like him and his fellow-believers, viz. "The Veds not only call the celestial representations deities ; but also, in many instances, give this divine epithet to the mind, diet, void space, quadrupeds, animals, and slaves :—But *neither* any of the celestial gods *nor* *any* existing creature can be considered the Lord of the universe, because the third Chapter of the Vedant explains, that by these appellations of the Ved, which denote the diffusive spirit of the Supreme Being equally over all creatures, by means of extension, his omnipresence is established." "Because the Ved declares the performance of these rules to be the cause of the *mind's* purification and its faith in God."

If notwithstanding these explanations offered by the Vedant, the Querist persist in his attempt to stigmatise the Ved, and thus argue, that any being declared by the Ved to be God, though figuratively, should be considered as God in reality, by the followers of that system, I would refer him to his own Bible, which in the same figurative sense applies the term "God" to the prophets and the chiefs of Israel, and identifies God with abstract properties, such as love &c. ; and I then ask the Querist, whether he admits them to be real Gods and offers his worship to them? and whether he be a follower of the dictates of the powerful passion of love in its most unlimited sense?

His second insinuation is this, that the Vedant does not forbid the worship of gods and goddesses ; and how then can the unity of God be inferred from that work? I reply : The Supreme Being is represented throughout the whole Vedant System as the only object of true adoration, of which the Querist will be convinced, if he refers to the following passages of the same translation, viz. "The worship authorised by all the Veds is of one nature : as the direction for the worship of the only Supreme Being is invariably found in every part of the

“Ved. The following passages of the Ved affirm that God is “the *sole* object of worship, viz. ‘Adore God *alone*’ ‘Know ‘God alone.’” With regard to the suggestions about the worship of other objects besides the Deity, the following explanation is given in the Vedant. “These, as well as several other texts of the same nature, are not real commands, but only direct those, (for instance idiots) who are *unfortunately* incapable of adoring the invisible Supreme Being, to apply their minds to any visible thing, rather than allow them to remain idle.”

In replying, as above, to all the “Christian’s” queries and insinuations, I have *confined* my quotations to the translation of the abridgement of the Vedant—an essay of 21 pages to which the Querist referred in his prefatory lines ; so that my readers may perceive that had the Querist read only that small work, divesting himself of religious prejudice, he would not have needed to put those questions.

## CHAPTER II.

### *Reasons of a Hindoo for rejecting the Doctrines of Christianity.*

The Querist then proceeds to direct personality, maintaining that, in common with Rammohun Roy, there are individuals in England, who regard the mind as God, and surrender themselves entirely to its suggestions ; since they receive, he alleges, only such portions of the Bible as suit their convenience and reject the rest ; and he confidently pronounces the doctrines which Rammohun Roy inculcates to be *all atheistical*. As these individuals must be better qualified than I can be to vindicate themselves from the charge of perverting the Scriptures, I need say nothing on this subject. I cannot however totally pass over the charge of atheism against the doctrines which I, in common with my Friend, inculcate ; and therefore beg to be allowed to make in this instance a few observations, which may lead my readers to enter upon an impartial investigation and to compare the re-

ligious opinions which the followers of the Vedant maintain, with those that the Querist and his fellow Christians profess.

The Querist probably means, that these individuals reject or misinterpret that portion of the Bible, which relates to the Trinity and the atonement of Christ, both considered by the Querist and his fellow believers, as the essential principles of Christianity. I have consequently attentively read the Bible of Christians ; but to my great astonishment, I have been unable to find any explanation of the Trinity in that book. I have therefore directed my attention to their Creed and some of the works of celebrated Christian writers, in the former of which I find the Triune God thus explained :

“The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God ; and yet there are not three Gods but one God.” I shall therefore submit to the Querist and his fellow believers cases exactly parallel to this doctrine, as differently viewed by learned Christians, and ask him, whether he can ever persuade himself to admit their possibility ?—1st. John is *homo* or a man, James is *homo* or a man, and Jacob is *homo* or a man, and yet there are not three *homines* or men but one man. 2nd. At the time when the whole human race, as stated in the Christian Scriptures, consisted of only three persons, it might have been, in like manner, asserted, that, “Adam is *homo* (or a person), Eve is *homo* (or a person) and Cain is *homo* (or a person) ; but there are not three *homines* (or persons) but one person,” the three being included under the abstract notion of *mankind*. 3rd. The father is *Sacerdos* (or a Priest) the son is *Sacerdos* (or a Priest) and the grand son is *sacerdos* (or a Priest) and yet there are not three *Sacerdotes* (or Priests) but one Priest under an abstract notion of the “Priesthood.” 4th. Wisdom is *qualitas* (or a quality,) power is *qualitas* (or a quality) and love is *qualitas* (or a quality,) and yet there are not three *qualitates* (or qualities) but one quality. 5th. Creation is *opus* (or a work,) Redemption is *opus* (or a work,) Sanctification is *opus* (or a work,) and yet there are not three *opera* or works, but one Work.

I regret that notwithstanding very great mental exertions, I am unable to attain a comprehension of this Creed.

These Missionary Gentlemen have come out to this country in the expectation, that grown men should first give up the use of their external senses, and should profess seriously, that although the Father is *ONE God* and the Son is *ONE God* and the Holy Ghost is *ONE God*, yet that the number of Gods does not exceed *ONE*—a doctrine which although unintelligible to others, having been imbibed by these pious men with their mothers' milk is of course as familiar to them, as the idea of the animation of the stony goddess "Kalee" is to an idolatrous Hindoo, by whom it has, in like manner, been acquired in his infancy.

A man does not, under various circumstances, always refuse to believe things that are beyond his comprehension ; but he will find it very hard, if not utterly impossible, to believe what is diametrically opposite to his senses, to his experience, to the uniform course of nature, and to the first axioms of reason : to wit, that there is *first* the Father-Deity, who is distinctly and by himself God, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, that there is *secondly* the Son-Deity, who is distinctly and by himself God omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, and that there is *thirdly* the Holy Ghost Deity, (in the neuter Gender) which is distinctly and by *itself* God, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, yet in defiance of the immutable principles of mathematical science, that these Deities amount to *no more than one*.

Exclusive of the writings of the ancient and modern popish Theologists and those of Dissenters from the Episcopal creed, I find, to my still greater surprise, in the works of some celebrated Christian writers, who are held as the most distinguished members of the Church of England, the most palpably contradictory explanations given of this Trinity, some of which I here notice.

First. Dr. Waterland, Dr. Taylor, and Archbishop Secker

maintain that the Trinity consists of three distinct, independent, and equal persons, constituting one and the same God ; thus representing the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost as three distinct substances under one Godhead.

2ndly. Dr. Wallis was an advocate for the Sabellian hypothesis, and probably Archbishop Tillotson, holding that three persons in the Trinity are only three modes or relations, which the Deity bears to his creatures,—thus declaring the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost to be three qualities, existing of course in the abstract notion of the God-head, which exists only in our imagination.

3rdly. Bishop Pearson, as well as Bishop Bull, and Dr. Owen suppose the Father to be an underived and essential essence and the Son to have received every thing by communication from God the Father. “There can be but one person,” (says Bishop Pearson,) “originally of himself, subsisting in that infinite Being, because a plurality of more persons so subsisting “would necessarily infer a multiplicity of Gods.” “The “Son possessed ” (says he,) “the whole nature by *communication* “not by *participation* and *in such way* that he was as really “God as the Father.” *i.e.* this third explanation contradicts the first with regard to the original deity of the second and third persons, and is entirely opposed to the second explanation.

4thly. Bishop Burgess supposes the three persons of the Deity to make one God, but does not allow that these persons are three beings, urging that “the Scriptures declare that “there is but only one God.—The same Scriptures declare that “there are three omnipresent persons ; but there cannot be “two omnipresent beings ; therefore the three omnipresent persons can be only one God.” According to this hypothesis, the Trinity is made up of three persons, each of which is not a being, *i.e.* of three nonentities.

5thly. In the system of Dr. Thomas Burnet, the Father is held to be a self-existent Being, the Son, and the Holy Ghost dependent ; and he thinks that divine perfections and worship



may be ascribed to each ; which somewhat resembles the Arian Creed.

6thly. Mr. Baxter defines the three divine Persons to be Wisdom, Power, and Love, and illustrates his meaning by the vital power, intellect, and will in the soul of man, *i.e.* he compares the three persons with three qualities—an opinion which resembles what was maintained by Sabellius and his followers.

7thly. Bishop Gastrell says “the three names of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, must denote a three-fold difference or distinction belonging to God, but such as is consistent with the unity and simplicity of the divine nature, for each of these includes the *whole* idea of God and *something more*. So far as they express the nature of God, they all adequately and exactly signify the same. It is the additional signification, which makes all the distinction between them,” *i.e.* according to Bishop Gastrell, “the Father includes the *whole* idea of God and *something more* ; the Son includes the *whole* idea of God and *something more* ; the Holy Ghost includes the *whole* idea of God and *something more* : while altogether, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost make one entire God, and “no more.” Here this learned Prelate introduces a new axiom, *viz.* That a part is greater than, or, at least, equal to, the whole.

8thly. According to Mr. Howe’s theory, there are three distinct, intelligent hypostases, each having a distinct, intelligent nature, united in some inexplicable manner so as to make one God in somewhat the same way as the corporeal, sensitive, and intellectual faculties are united to form one man, *i.e.* he gives us to understand that the Godhead is something more than the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost in the same manner as a complete man is something more than the corporeal sensitive, and intellectual faculties.

9thly. Dr. Sherlock says “The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are *as really distinct* Persons as Peter, James, and John, each of which is God. We must allow each Person to “be a God. These three infinite minds are distinguished, just

“as three created minds are, by self-consciousness. And by “mutual consciousness each person of these has the *whole* wisdom “power, and goodness of the other two.” *i. e.* this divine sets forth a system of perfect polytheism ; but does not, like the others, offer any apology for it.

10thly. Dr. Heber, the present Bishop of Calcutta, maintains that the second and third persons in the Trinity are no other than the angels *Michael* and *Gabriel*. It was the Second Person, who conversed with Moses from Mount Sinai, and the Third person, who constituted the Jewish Shekinah.

The theory of the Godhead proposed by this pious and learned Prelate, although it is at variance with the opinions of several other Divines, must yet be gratifying to Hindoo Theologians, who have long cherished the doctrine of the Metempsychosis, or the transmigration of spirits from one body to another. Since, the belief in the Second Person of the Godhead, originally a mere spirit, taking, at one time, according to this theory, the form of an *Angel* (*Michael*) and afterwards assuming the body of *Man* (*Jesus Christ*) by means of natural birth, which was effected, as is said, by the Virgin Mary and the Angel *Gabriel*—countenances the doctrine of the migration of spirits from the bodies of superior to those of inferior creatures.

Are not these explanations of the Trinity, given by the persons most versed in the Scriptures, sufficient to puzzle any man, if not drive him to atheism? Supposing a Hindoo or a Mussulman were ready and willing to embrace the Christian faith, would he not sincerely repent of his rashness, as soon as he discovered that the accounts of the essence of the Christian religion, given by the principal persons of the Church, are as opposite to each other as the west is to the east? Would he not be utterly astonished at the idea, that a nation who are so celebrated for their progress in the arts and sciences, for the enjoyment of political and civil liberty, and for their freedom of inquiry and discussion, should neglect their religious faith

so much as to allow it still to stand upon the monstrously absurd basis of popery ?\*

I myself, however, am not surprised at the many contradictory accounts they have given of the Trinity ; because when the building is the mere creature of *fancy*, it is not to be expected that its architects should well agree in their description of its form and proportions. Nor do I wonder at this faith being forsaken by a great number of intelligent European gentlemen, whom the orthodox are fond of stigmatizing as *Infidels*, since it appears to me, that any person endowed with a moderate share of common sense, not entirely perverted by early prejudices thrust upon him in the helpless infancy of his mind, must be able to tear off the parti-coloured veil of sophistry from the face of this Creed and discover its real monstrosity.

Instead of stigmatizing those Gentlemen, the Missionaries ought, I think, to have thanked them gratefully, for the safe-standing of the frail edifice of their extraordinary creed, since it is the indifference of a great number of learned Europeans about the religion which they from policy profess, accompanied with the bigoted adherence to Christianity imposed upon a considerable portion of men of the middling class, which, and which alone, has been hitherto the cause of the security of a faith contradictory to common sense and opposed to the evidence of the senses, in a nation so highly exalted by its literature.

Some well-meaning Christians plausibly argue, that, whether the doctrine of the Trinity be reasonable or not,—what does it signify, this being a mere matter of speculation,—if the practical parts of Christianity and its religious observances are salutary ?

In the first place I wish to know, whether the Missionaries

\* By a reference to the Histories of the ancient Greeks and Romans and to those of Chungiz Khan and others, the readers may be convinced that truth and true religion do not always accompany wealth, power and conquest, high names or lofty palaces.—(Note of the 2nd edition—Ed.)

preach the practical parts of Christianity separately from the doctrine of the Trinity and that of the atonement, or whether, on the contrary, they do not consider these doctrines to be the fundamental principles of the Christian Faith, so that, no man can possibly benefit by the practical parts of Christianity, unless he is enabled to pervert his senses, so far as to believe in the truth of these doctrines? If the latter be the case, these well-meaning persons will, I trust, excuse the rejection of Christianity by the grown up natives of India, in consideration of the great difficulty or rather impossibility every one must encounter who attempts to enforce belief upon himself or upon others.

In the second place I take the liberty of asking these well-meaning Gentlemen, whether it is a matter of speculation to believe *one* to be *three* and *three* to be *one*? Whether it is a matter of opinion to bring ourselves to believe that a *perfect man* is *perfect God*, or in other words, that a complete man is not a man? Whether it is a matter of speculation to be convinced that an object confined to a small portion of the Earth comprehends literally *all the fulness* of the Deity bodily, and spreads over the whole universe? Is it also a matter of speculation that God whom Christians and their Scripture represent as mere spirit and as the author of the universe, was of the very seed of the Jewish Patriarch Abraham, and of Jewish King David? If these be matters of opinion, what then are matters grossly repugnant to reason and contrary to fact? The almighty and eternal Being (according to these Christian theologians) was *born*, *grew* to manhood, suffered and died a shameful death. Does this signify nothing? Does it signify nothing to degrade our faculties and give up the use of our senses, while we are viewing the visible object of nature? If we do so in one thing, why not do it in another? If we set out on this irrational career, where are we to stop? May we not from the example set in Theology, lay aside the use of reason in other sciences also, and thereby impede the progress of knowledge and introduce incalculable evils into the world? I

therefore hope that these Gentlemen will, after more mature consideration, discover the doctrine of the Trinity and the idea of a *Mangod* or *Godman* to be unnatural and pregnant with absurdity, and not a mere innocent speculation.

If British Missionaries are under an obligation to preach Christianity to the natives of India, they ought for the glory of their nation, holding so conspicuous a place among the people of the East, and also for the sake of their own characters as a Literary Body, to confine their instructions to the practical parts of Christianity, keeping entirely out of view the doctrine of the Trinity and the idea of a two or three fold nature of God and Man, or God, Man and Angel, which are, to say the least, very much calculated to lower the reputation of Britons both as a learned and as a religious people.

It is characteristic of protestant writers to expose to ridicule any other system of religion which they disapprove. For instance, some of their eminent writers have proceeded so far in attacking the doctrine of Transubstantiation maintained by the Catholics, as to apply to the bread which the Catholics consider as the real flesh of Christ, the epithet *Panarious Deus* or "Breaden God" &c.

Now I only beg to be allowed on this occasion to ask Protestant Gentlemen, who think themselves justified in believing that a human body was, by supernatural power, in a literal sense filled with all the fulness of the Godhead, how they can object so violently to the opinion entertained by the Catholics that a piece of bread by the same supurnatural power is filled with divine spirit? And if they can apply to Catholics the term "Worshippers of a Breaden God," how can the professors of the Trinity disapprove of the terms "Worshippers of a Fleshly God, or Jew God" being applied to themselves.

Whoever, in fact, is unable to perceive the wide distinction between *the supreme* and *eternal* Being and a *helpless mortal man*, must surely confess, if endowed with the faculty of reason, that he has grossly abused it in contemplating the

nature of the deity. The immense distance between the human and divine nature cannot be diminished by the efforts of any mortal; and therefore whoever accepts man, dead or alive, for his god, voluntarily sinks himself to the same unfathomable distance below the level of one of the human species. Should he then presume to claim the rank of man, he would thereby equalize his nature with that of his God and be justly chargeable with gross inconsistency. Indeed I do not see what can prevent his fellow believers, or man-worshippers, from accusing him of blasphemy—in making himself equal with God; or how rational men can avoid viewing him as the victim of early prejudices—however many sciences he may have studied, however many books he may have written, whatever titles of learning may have been bestowed upon him and with whatever contempt he may affect to regard the genuine Brahmunical religion. I say, the genuine Brahmunical religion, taught by the Veds, as interpreted by the inspired Munoo, not the popular system of worship adopted by the multitude. If a Christian were to insist on considering the latter with all its corruptions as the standard of Hindooism, then a Hindoo would also be justified in taking as the standard of Christianity, the system of religion which almost universally prevailed in Europe previous to the fifteenth century of the Christian Era, and which is still followed by the majority of Christians (namely, Catholics, Greeks, Armenians) with all its idols, crucifixes, Saints, miracles, pecuniary absolutions from sins, trinity, transubstantiation, relics, holy water, and other idolatrous machinery.\*

With regard to the doctrine of the atonement, we are given to understand by Christians, that God the Father having been offended by the transgressions of the human race, resolved (though against the suggestion of his mercy) that he would not forgive them unless some adequate sacrifice were offered to him, so that his justice should not be disregarded through the influence of

\* In the second edition of the 2nd chapter (see our note in page 208) this paragraph was omitted.—Ed.

his mercy. Upon this resolution on the part of God the Father, God the Son having great compassion towards men guilty of sins unto death, took upon himself the human nature and offered to God the Father his own life as an adequate atonement, and thereby reconciled to the Father Deity as many men as would believe in the offer of his blood for the remission of sin.

The Missionary Gentlemen hereby maintain, that although God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost were equally merciful and just, and equally averse to sin; yet the Father having a strict regard to the preservation of the balance of power between Mercy and Justice, did not suffer his Mercy to violate Justice, and insisted, that the sins of men should not be forgiven unless a human sacrifice were made to him. But the Son being more under the influence of mercy and totally regardless of justice, condescended to assume the human nature and to bear the punishment of their sin. Thus by offering himself as a sacrifice, he washed away their transgressions with his blood, without expecting any sacrifice to be made to him, for the satisfaction of his Justice; while God the Holy Ghost, again, took no part whatever in the performance of the sacrifice, either as the Satisfier or the Satisfied, and remained quite neutral. Hence, is it not evident, that God the Father is more strict about the observance of Justice than God the Son? that God the Father was less liable to the influence of Mercy than God the Son? and that God the Holy Ghost manifested neither Mercy nor Justice in the sacrificial atonement? Do not these circumstances completely overthrow the doctrine which these Gentlemen preach, viz. that God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are equally just and merciful?

*Secondly.* They ascribe to God the attribute of justice according to the human notion of that attribute, i. e. as a just judge can never be so influenced by his mercy as to forgive a man guilty of capital crimes, without inflicting upon him the punishment of death; so God never can violate justice through the influence of his mercy in forgiving sins unto death,

without inflicting extreme punishment. Supposing, then, for the sake of argument, that divine justice can be viewed according to the standard of the human notion of justice, I ask whether it is consistent with the human notion of justice to release millions of men each guilty of sins unto death, after inflicting death upon another person, (whether God or man) who never participated in their sins, even though that person had voluntarily proposed to embrace death? or whether it is not a great violation of justice, according to the human notion of it, to put an innocent person to a painful death for the transgressions of others, notwithstanding he, in his human capacity, manifested very great reluctance to that death, as is admitted in the account of the life of Jesus Christ in Matthew Ch. XXVI. 37—39.

*Thirdly.* Sins are of two kinds, that is, sins against God merely, and sins against God and man, such as theft, robbery, deception &c. I therefore wish to know whether it is not an entire disregard of justice, according to the human notion, that the sins committed against one person should be forgiven by another, without his consent to such pardons? Whether it is not an infringement of justice on the part of God the Son, according to the human notion of justice, to wash away with his blood the sins of theft, robbery, or murder committed by one man against others, and to disregard their individual sufferings? But if Christians really imagine that true believers in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ have their past sins as well against God as against man, washed away by his blood, are they not extremely presumptuous and culpable in inflicting punishment upon their fellow Christians for any crime they may have committed, knowing that atonement has already been made for it by the blood of their God, which was shed on the cross? Yet we every day see Christians inflict on one another severe punishment, for the sins committed by them, notwithstanding the remission of their sins through their faith in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ.



*Fourthly.* These Gentlemen believe, that the Son washes away the sins of those who place their faith in his vicarious sacrifice, and not of men in general. This shews that the act of pardoning the sins of men by God the Son, proceeded from a reciprocal consideration, and not from his infinite mercy towards mankind. As according to this doctrine, millions of inhabitants of remote countries, islands and mountains, who never heard even the name of Christianity, have died in sin, ever since the time of the vicarious sacrifice offered by Christ, without having it in their power to enter into the necessary bargain for the forgiveness of their sins by offering, in return, their faith in the atonement made by Christ. But those who have been born in countries where they could readily acquire this faith, while they rely upon the possession of this as the means of purchasing their own salvation, inconsistently condemn such of their fellow-Christians as hope to be saved through a virtuous life and sincere repentance, accusing them of presumption and self sufficiency in pretending to be saved by such merits. Yet it is evident that the former who boast of their faith, are the persons really guilty of pride and self sufficiency, since for this single merit of theirs, they think themselves fully entitled to salvation; and at the same time they condemn and depreciate the merits of others, who nevertheless consider that both faith and good works proceed from the grace of God.

These Gentlemen are apt to find fault with and ascribe unreasonableness to every other system of religion, shutting entirely their eyes upon the total want of reason and rationality in the faith which they themselves profess and preach. For, is there any notion more unreasonable and conducive to immoral practices than the idea, that God *has blood*, and that that blood is offered *by God* to reconcile *to God* such men as, at any time during their lives, place faith in that *blood of God*, *however guilty* these men may be of offending God and injuring their fellow-creatures.

As to their attempts at the converting of Hindoos to the Christian Faith, these Teachers of strange doctrines may now have been convinced by experience, after the exertions of a quarter of a century, that no grown up native of India possessed of common sense and common honesty, will ever be persuaded to believe in their self-contradictory Creed, and that their religious efforts will be unavailing, unless they adopt, or be enabled to adopt, some unfair means for the promotion of Christianity. Since the Hindoo population in Bengal, from the circumstances of their early marriages, and their continual residence either at home or at an inconsiderable distance from their birth place, and from the enjoyment of local comfort under the peaceful sway of the British nation, has been increasing with uncommon rapidity, and as they are, at the same time, prohibited from foreign trade by their religious prejudices, prevented from entering into the military service, owing to their habitual aversion to war, and do not now, as in former times, receive gifts of lands free from assessments which tended much to encourage an idle life, many families have already become very indigent and a greater number must, sooner or later, be reduced to poverty. It is therefore more than probable, that the most weak and needy among them may be induced, by the hope of worldly advantages, to sell their conscience and their religion, in the same manner as a great many Israelites have been persuaded to profess Christianity, by the severe policy, adopted towards Jews on the one hand, and the encouragement to apostatize, held out on the other, by Societies established in Europe for their conversion.

I shall now, in a few words, for the information of the Missionary Gentlemen, lay down our religious creed. In conformity with the Precepts of our ancient religion, contained in the Holy Vedant, though disregarded by the generality of moderns, we look up to ONE BEING as the animating and regulating principle of the whole collective body of the universe, and as the origin of all individual souls, which in a manner somewhat

similar, vivify and govern their particular bodies ; and we reject Idolatry in every form and under whatsoever veil of sophistry it may be practised, either in adoration of an artificial, a natural, or an imaginary object. The divine homage which we offer, consists solely in the practice of *Duya* or benevolence towards each other, and not in a fanciful faith or in certain motions of the feet, legs, arms, head, tongue or other bodily organs, in a pulpit or before a temple. Among other objects, in our solemn devotion, we frequently offer up our humble thanks to God, for the blessings of British Rule in India and sincerely pray, that it may continue in its beneficent operation for centuries to come.

SHIVUPRUSAD SURMA.

CALCUTTA, *November* 15, 1823.

# ANSWER OF A HINDOO

TO THE QUESTION,

“WHY DO YOU FREQUENT A UNITARIAN PLACE OF WORSHIP INSTEAD OF THE NUMEROUSLY ATTENDED ESTABLISHED CHURCHES?”



## ANSWER OF A HINDOO

To the question, "Why do you frequent a Unitarian place of worship, instead of the numerously attended established Churches?"

I. Because the prayers read, worship offered, and sermons preached in the Unitarian place of worship remind me of the infinitely wise Ruler of this infinite universe, without ascribing to him, as Churchmen do, fellow-creators or co-operators equal in power and other attributes. My plain understanding, though it can comprehend the idea of fellow-creatures, is incapable of forming a notion of one or more fellow-creators, each equally possessed of omnipotence and omnipresence.

II. Because Unitarian prayer, worship, and preaching constantly put me in mind of the beneficial design kept in view by the wise and benevolent Author of all, in organizing the members of the animal body, such as bones, veins, vessels, limbs &c. and in preparing the manifold necessities of life for our maintenance, as proofs of his gratuitous blessing and free grace; while in those Churches he is declared to have refused mercy and salvation to mankind until innocent blood was offered him to appease his wrath.

III. Because the Unitarian mode of worship exhibits how that infinite and Supreme author has designedly stationed the heavenly bodies, in systematic order, capable of producing and nourishing all the animal and vegetable objects under his divine control; while in those Churches that infinite being is represented as occupying a small space in this limited world, lying in a still smaller space in the womb of a virgin, subject to the control of his parents, though for a season, and daily performing the various animal functions.

IV. Because I feel already weary of the doctrine of “Man-God” or “God-Man”\* frequently inculcated by the Brahmuns, in pursuance of their corrupt traditions: the same doctrine of Man-God, though preached by another body of priests better dressed, better provided for, and eminently elevated by virtue of conquest, cannot effectually tend to excite my anxiety or curiosity to listen to it.

V. Because I have expressed my disgust, when I heard from the Brahmuns the incredible story that God appeared in the form of a party-coloured kite, to accomplish certain purposes. While I maintain the same reverence for the Divine Being, I must be excused believing a similar doctrine held forth in those Churches, as to the appearance of God, on another occasion, in the bodily shape of a Dove. I wonder to observe, that from a denial of the existence of God some are stigmatized with the term atheist; while others are highly respected, though they do not scruple, under the shield of religion, to bring the Deity into ridicule, by representing him in the form even of a common bird.

VI. Because having been taught in the schools, where the doctrine of the Incarnations of a two-fold or even of a three-fold† nature has been solemnly preached, I perceive no novelty in the idea of a two-fold nature, divine and human, as entertained and expressed in those Churches.

VII. Because in those Churches, the Holy Ghost is represented as the very God and not as the miraculous power of the Deity, at the same time that the language applied there to this person of the Godhead, such as “she was found with child of the Holy Ghost”—“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee”‡ fully corresponds to the words and ideas used for the Deity in the western and eastern heathen mythologies,

\* Munoo, Duttatruyu, Ram &c. &c. &c.

† ব্রহ্মবিবর্তন: mixed nature of man, lion, and God.

‡ The Virgin Mary.

and consequently must be offensive to the feelings of those who ascribe to God purity and perfection.

VIII. Because the doctrine of the trinity inculcated in those Churches, consisting of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, is defensible only on the plea of mystery ; while the Trinity preached to us by the Brahmuns is a representation of the three principal attributes of the Deity in an allegorical sense, and does therefore deserve some momentary attention. The mind which rejects the latter as a production of the fancy, cannot be reasonably expected to adopt the former.

IX. Because Unitarians reject polytheism and idolatry under every sophistical modification, and thereby discountenance all the evil consequences resulting from them.

X. Because Unitarians believe, profess, and inculcate the doctrine of the divine unity—a doctrine which I find firmly maintained both by the Christian Scriptures and by our most ancient writings commonly called the Veds.

Such are my reasons for attending the Unitarian place of worship instead of the established Churches.

CHUNDRU-SHEKHUR DEV.\*

\* It was written by Raja Ram Mohun Roy, though, as he did on many other occasions, he put the name of his disciple Chundru Shekhur Dev as the author. We have the authority of Babu Chundru Shekhur Dev himself for this statement.—ED.





TRANSLATION  
OF A  
SUNSCRIT TRACT  
ON  
DIFFERENT MODES OF WORSHIP.

*By a Friend of the Author.*

CALCUTTA :  
1825.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

A small tract in Sanscrit with a translation into Bengalee has of late been published by a Hindoo Theologian, Shivuprusad Shurma, on the subject of modes of worship with or without images. Having found it to exhibit views of the Hindoo religion somewhat different from those which are commonly entertained by Europeans, I have prepared a translation of it into English with some explanatory notes, which I beg to submit to the English reader.

*Calcutta, 18 January, 1825.*

# TRANSLATION OF A SUNSCRIT TRACT

ON

DIFFERENT MODES OF WORSHIP.\*

## *Query.*

In some Shastrus many authorities are found enjoining worship by means of idols ; in others are passages dissuading from such worship. Doubts having hence arisen, may the learned be pleased to remove them ?

(Signed) *Ramdhun Shurma.*

## *Reply.*

In answer to the subject of this query the decision which is given, in the essence of all the Shastrus (*the Bhagvut*), by that great and worshipful Saint (Vyas) who had a thorough knowledge of all the Veds, seems sufficient to remove these doubts entirely. It is as follows (according to the gloss of Shreedhur) :—“ Man shall worship me the Lord of the Universe by means of an image or any other form, during the intervals of leisure from the performance of the ritual observances prescribed for the class to which he belongs, until he becomes conscious that I dwell in all beings.” The worshipful and revered Shreedhur commenting upon this text, adds here :—“ This verse shews that worship by means of an idol or any other form is not absolutely useless, and that as long as a man is subjected to worship by means of idols, he is also subjected to perform the ritual observances prescribed to his own class.” This passage limits the period of idol worship and explains what practices are its necessary accompaniments.

\* It was published as will appear from the title page by “A Friend of the Author,” the ‘Friend’ and the ‘Author’ Shiva Prusad Shurma both being evidently Ram Mohun Roy himself.—ED.

Vyas then proceeds :—" Further, man, by charity *to the needy*, "by honour *to others*, by friendship, and by an equal regard *to all*, shall direct his worship to me who, by residing in the heart, "dwell in all living creatures."\*

Vyas continues in six and a half verses beginning with the following verse, "Animate objects are preferable to inanimate," &c. ; and ending with the following sentence, "He to whom these *four* duties are prescribed in the above text shall, mentally, do reverence and profess much respect to all creatures, according to the different degrees of their visible excellences." He (Vyas) then concludes :—Man shall respect them "by observing that

\* Spiritual Devotion is of two kinds. The first consists in meditation on the soul being of divine origin. A continuance of such meditation is believed to have a tendency to rescue the soul from all human feelings and passions, and thereby the soul is ultimately brought to its original divine perfection far surpassing both human search and description. This is the state which is commonly called absorption. The devotees who adhere to this mode of devotion being supposed naturally incapable of committing any moral or social crime, are not subjected to the precepts or prohibitions found in the Shastras.

The second kind of devotion consists in believing that the Deity is possessed of all the attributes of perfection such as omnipresence, omnipotence, &c., and that the individual sentient soul is, in its present state of material connection, separate from, and dependent on, the Deity. Besides, the practice of charity &c., as mentioned in this text are enjoined on the performers of this mode of devotion as their religious duties. This class of devotees enjoy, after death, eternal beatitude in the highest heaven, as existences separate from the Deity and from each other, while worshippers by means of forms, as the Vedant affirms, enjoy only temporary bliss.

From what I have noticed as to the two kinds of notions entertained respecting spiritual devotion, the reader will perceive the reason why a teacher of spiritual knowledge sometimes is justified in speaking of the Deity in the first person, in reference to the assumed divine nature of his soul, although in the same discourse, he again treats of God in the third person, in reference to the present separated and subordinate state of the soul.

the all powerful Lord is in the heart watching over the soul.”\* Hence the author himself explains that the observance of “an equal regard to all” *creatures* directed in the above verse is in reference to their being equally related to the divine Spirit and not in reference to their qualities or identities.

It follows therefore that passages enjoining worship by means of forms, and passages dissuading from such worship, should be separately applied to those who entertain these different sentiments.†

\* “Two birds, cohabitant and coessential, reside unitedly in one tree *which is the body*. One of them (*the soul*) consumes the variously tasted fruits of its actions : but the other (God) without partaking of them, witnesses *all events*.” *Moondukopinishud, ch. the 3rd.*

“God as being resplendent and most proximate to all creatures is styled the operator in the heart.” *Moonduk the second, Section the 2nd.*

† Under the Christian dispensation, worship through matter seems unauthorised ; John ch : IV. v. 21 “The hour cometh when ye shall, neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father &c.” 23 “But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth ” &c. ; although in the Juaical religion such worship was sanctioned, as appears from the Books of Leviticus and others, and even from the above quoted verses of the Gospel of John.



# HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

TO

HIS COUNTRYMEN

WHO BELIEVE

IN THE

ONE TRUE GOD:

BY

*Prusunnu Koomar Thakoor.*

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CALCUTTA :

1823.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

*My object in publishing this tract is to recommend those to whom it is addressed, to avoid using harsh or abusive language in their religious intercourse with European Missionaries, either respecting them or the objects of their worship, however much this may be countenanced by the example of some of these Gentlemen.*

*P. K. T.*

## HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS.\*

Those who firmly believe on the authority of the Veds, that “God is *ONE only* without an equal”, and that “He cannot be known either through the medium of language, thought, or vision : how can he be known except as existing, *the origin and support of the universe*?”—and who endeavour to regulate their conduct by the following precept, “He who is desirous of eternal happiness should regard another as he regards himself, and the happiness and misery of another as his own”, ought to manifest the warmest affection towards such of their own countrymen as maintain the same faith and practice, even although they have not all studied the Veds for themselves, but have professed a belief in God only through an acquaintance with their general design. Many among the ten classes of Sunnyasees, and all the followers of Gooroo Nanuk, of Dadoo, and of Kubeer, as well as of Suntu &c. profess the religious sentiments above mentioned. It is our unquestionable duty invariably to treat them as brethren. No doubt should be entertained of their future salvation, merely because they receive instructions, and practise their sacred music, in the vernacular dialect. For Yajnuvulkyu, with a reference to those who cannot sing the Hymns of the Veds, has said “The divine hymns *Rik, Gatha, Panika*, and *Dukshubikita* should be sung ; because by their constant use man attains supreme beatitude.” “He who is skilled in playing on the lute (veena), who is intimately acquainted with the various tones and harmonies, and who is able to beat time in music, will enter without difficulty upon the road of salvation.” Again the Shivu Dhurmu as quoted by Rughoonundun, says, “He is reputed a Gooroo who according to the capacity of his disciple instructs him in Sunskrit whether pure or corrupt, in the current language of the country, or by any other means.”

\* Of this also, like the previous treatise, Raja Ram Mohun Roy was the author, as will be apparent from the most superficial reading of it. Prusunnu Kumar Thakoor's name was put to this as the Raja was fond of writing anonymously and of giving the names of others to his own works.—ED.

Amongst foreigners, those Europeans who believe God to be in every sense ONE, and worship HIM ALONE in spirit, and who extend their benevolence to man as the highest service to God, should be regarded by us with affection, on the ground of the object of their worship being the same as ours. We should feel no reluctance to co-operate with them in religious matters, merely because they consider Jesus Christ as the Messenger of God and their Spiritual Teacher ; for oneness in the object of worship and sameness of religious practice should produce attachment between the worshippers.

Amongst Europeans, those who believe Jesus Christ to be God himself, and conceive him to be possessed of a particular form, and maintain Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be one God, should not be treated in an unfriendly manner. On the contrary, we should act towards them in the same manner as we act towards those of our countrymen who, without forming any external image, meditate upon Ram and other supposed incarnations, and believe in their unity.

Again, those amongst Europeans who believing Jesus Christ to be the Supreme Being, moreover construct various images of him, should not be hated. On the contrary, it becomes us to act towards those Europeans in the same manner as we act towards such as believe Ram &c. to be incarnations of God, and form external images of them. For, the religious principles of the two last mentioned sects of foreigners are one and the same with those of the two similar sects among Hindoos, although they are clothed in a different garb.

When any belonging to the second and third classes of Europeans endeavour to make converts of us, the believers in the only living and true God, even then we should feel no resentment towards them, but rather compassion, on account of their blindness to the errors into which they themselves have fallen. Since it is almost impossible, as every day's experience teaches us, for men, when possessed of wealth and power, to perceive their own defects.

A LETTER  
TO  
REV. HENRY WARE  
ON THE  
PROSPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY  
IN  
INDIA :

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1824.



A LETTER  
ON THE  
PROSPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY

AND THE MEANS OF PROMOTING ITS RECEPTION IN INDIA.\*

SIR,

With no ordinary feelings of satisfaction I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of April last, which together with the queries it enclosed, I had the pleasure of receiving by the hands of my friend Captain Heard. I now beg to be allowed, in the first place, to express my gratitude for your kind notice of a stranger like myself, residing in a remote country ; and, secondly, to return my sincere thanks for the most acceptable present of books with which you have favoured me.

\* This letter was written under the following circumstances :—The Rev. Henry Ware, of Harvard College, Cambridge (U. S.), a well known Unitarian minister, addressed a series of questions to Ram Mohun Roy and to Rev. Mr. Adam on the subject of the ‘Prospects of Christianity and the means of promoting its reception in India’ to which each of them sent careful answers. We give below the letter which the reverend gentleman addressed to Ram Mohun Roy.

*‘Cambridge, April 24, 1823.*

SIR,

The subject and the occasion of this letter, I hope, will be thought to offer a sufficient apology for its being addressed to you by a stranger. A number of Unitarian Christians, with whom I am associated, take a deep interest in extending the knowledge and the blessings of Christianity to those who have not enjoyed its light. But they believe that the methods which have hitherto been employed, are not likely to be effectual ; yet they are unwilling to relinquish the hope, that some others may be suggested by a better knowledge than we now possess of the actual state of things, that shall prove more successful. They avail themselves therefore of this opportunity, through Captain Heard, who is the bearer of this, to endeavour to procure such information, as may assist them in judging, whether any thing can be done by them to advance the cause of

I should have answered your letter by the ship *Bengal* ; but I regret to say, that my time and attention had been so much engrossed by constant controversies with polytheists both of the West and East, that I had only leisure to answer by that opportunity a short letter which I had the pleasure of receiving from Mr. Reed of Boston, and was obliged to defer a reply

Christianity in India. In pursuance of their design, and by their desire, I have prepared a number of questions, a copy of which is enclosed, upon which Captain Heard is kind enough to offer his services to obtain such information as he can from the best sources. From none can we hope for so much, or so satisfactory knowledge, as from yourself. In your excellent publications, some of which I have seen, we find much of the information which we needed, and a satisfactory answer to some of the questions.

Permit me, Sir, to express the very high gratification which I have derived from discussions of the most important subjects of Christian Theology, and interpretations of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, from the pen of a native of India, bearing such marks of clear and enlightened views, and of extensive and accurate learning, as would do honour to the best educated European divine. Allow me also, for the satisfaction which I have received from the perusal of your writings, to present you, together with my thanks, a few pamphlets ; presuming that you may take an interest in knowing in what manner similar subjects are discussed by us in this part of the world.

May I hope also that you will favour me with your opinions, and with such information as you can give, on the several topics to which the questions relate. Any information or opinions on those subjects, or upon any other points which you may think would be useful to us, will be highly valued, and received with great respect and thankfulness, by, Sir,

Yours with high consideration,

HENRY WARE.

P. S. Besides the questions which accompany this, there is another upon which I am desirous of *your opinion*. It is this. With the complete knowledge which you possess of the character both of the Hindoo and of the Christian Theology, and of their moral influence and tendency, do you think it desirable, that the inhabitants of India should be converted to Christianity ; in what degree desirable, and for what reasons ?

H. W.'

The whole correspondence was published in the form of a pamphlet in Cambridge (U. S.) in 1824, and reprinted in London in 1825. —Ed.

to your queries until the present occasion. For this apparent neglect I have to request your pardon.

I have now prepared such replies to those queries as my knowledge authorizes and my conscience permits ; and now submit them to your judgment. There is one question at the concluding part of your letter, (to wit, "Whether it be desirable that the inhabitants of India should be converted to Christianity ; in what degree desirable, and for what reasons ?") which I pause to answer, as I am led to believe, from reason, what is set forth in scripture, that "in every nation he that *feareth* God and worketh *righteousness* is accepted with him," in whatever form of worship he may have been taught to glorify God. Nevertheless, I presume to think, that Christianity, if properly inculcated, has a greater tendency to improve the moral, social, and political state of mankind, than any other known religious system.

It is impossible for me to describe the happiness I feel at the idea that so great a body of a free, enlightened, and powerful people, like your countrymen, have engaged in purifying the religion of Christ from those absurd, idolatrous doctrines and practices, with which the Greek, Roman, and Barbarian converts to Christianity have mingled it from time to time. Nothing can be a more acceptable homage to the Divine Majesty, or a better tribute to reason, than an attempt to root out the idea that the omnipresent Deity should be generated in the womb of a female, and live in a state of subjugation for several years, and lastly offer his blood to another person of the *God-head*, whose anger could not be appeased except by the sacrifice of a portion of himself in a human form ; so no service can be more advantageous to mankind than an endeavour to withdraw them from the belief that an imaginary faith, ritual observances, or outward marks, independently of good works, can cleanse men from the stain of past sins, and secure their eternal salvation.

Several able friends of truth in England have, in like manner,



successfully engaged themselves in this most laudable undertaking. From the nature of her constitution, however, these worthy men have not only to contend with the religious prejudices of education in the popular corruptions of Christianity ; but are also opposed by all the force which the Established Church derives from the abundant revenues appropriated to the sustainers of her dogmas. Happily for you, it is only prejudice, unarmed with wealth and power, that you have to struggle with, which, of itself, is, I must confess, a sufficiently formidable opponent.

Your country, however, in free inquiry into religious truth, excels even England, and I have therefore every reason to hope, that the truths of Christianity will soon, throughout the United States, triumph over the present prevailing corruptions. I presume to say, that no native of those States can be more fervent than myself in praying for the uninterrupted happiness of your country, and for what I cannot but deem essential to its prosperity—the perpetual union of all the States under one general government. Would not the glory of England soon be dimmed, were Scotland and Ireland separated from her ? This and many other illustrations cannot have escaped your attention. I think no true and prudent friend of your country could wish to see the power and independence at present secured to all by a general government, exposed to the risk that would follow, were a dissolution to take place, and each state left to pursue its own individual interests, and maintain them from her own resources. As Captain Endicott has been kind enough to offer to take charge of any parcel that I might wish to send you, I have the pleasure of sending the accompanying publications, of which I beg your acceptance. I now conclude my letter with sincere wishes for your health and success, and remain, with the greatest regard,

Yours most obediently,

RAMMOHUN ROY.

*Calcutta, February 2, 1824.*

“I. *What is the real success of the great exertions which are making for the conversion of the natives of India to Christianity?*”

“II. *What is the number and character of converts?*”

To reply to each of these questions is indeed to enter on a very delicate subject, as the Baptist Missionaries of *Serampore* determinedly contradict any one that may express a doubt as to the success of their labours; and they have repeatedly given the public to understand, that their converts were not only numerous but also respectable in their conduct; while the young Baptist Missionaries in Calcutta, though not inferior to any Missionaries in India in abilities and acquirements, both European and Asiatic, nor in Christian zeal and exertions, are sincere enough to confess openly, that the number of their converts, after the hard labour of six years, does not exceed *four*; and in like manner the Independent Missionaries of this city, whose resources are much greater than those of Baptists, candidly acknowledge, that their Missionary exertions for seven years have been productive only of *one convert*.

To avoid, however, the occasion of a further dispute on this point with the Serampore Missionaries, I beg to substitute for my answer to the above queries, the language of the Rev. Abbé Dubois, who, after a mission of thirty years in India, is better qualified than I am, to give a decided opinion upon these subjects, and whose opinions deserve more reliance than those of a private individual who has never engaged in Missionary duties. The quotation above alluded to is as follows.

“Question of conversion.—The question to be considered may be reduced to these two points: First, Is there a possibility of making real converts to Christianity among the natives in India? Secondly, Are the means employed for that purpose, and above all, the translation of the Holy Scriptures into the idioms of the country, likely to conduce to this desirable object?

“To both interrogatories I will answer in the negative: it is my decided opinion, first, that under existing circum-

tances there is no human possibility of converting the Hindoos to any sect of Christianity ; and, secondly, that the translation of the Holy Scriptures circulated among them, so far from conducing to this end, will, on the contrary, increase the prejudices of the natives against the Christian religion, and prove, in many respects, detrimental to it. These assertions, coming from a person of my profession, may to many appear bold and extraordinary : I will therefore support them by such arguments and proofs, as a long experience and practice in the career of proselytism have enabled me to adduce.

“ When I was at Vellore, four years ago, in attendance on a numerous congregation living in that place, having been informed that the Lutheran Missionaries kept a Catechist or native religious teacher at that station on a salary of five pagodas a month, I was led to suppose that they had a numerous flock there ; but I was not a little surprised, when on inquiry I found that the whole congregation consisted of only *three individuals*, namely, *a drummer, a cook, and a horse-keeper*.

“ In the mean time, do not suppose, that those thin congregations are wholly composed of converted pagans ; at least half consists of Catholic apostates, who went over to the Lutheran sect in times of famine, or from other interested motives.

“ It is uncommon on the coast to see natives who successively pass from one religion to another, according to their actual interest. In my last journey to Madras, I became acquainted with native converts, who regularly changed their religion twice a year, and who, for a long while, were in the habit of being six months Catholic and six months Protestant.

“ Behold the Lutheran Mission, established in India more than a century ago ; interrogate its Missionaries ; ask them what were their successes during so long a period, and through what means were gained over the few proselytes they made. Ask them whether the interests of their sect are improving, or whether they are gaining ground, or whether their small numbers are not rather dwindling away ?

“Behold the truly industrious, the unaffected and unassuming Moravian brethren: ask them how many converts they have made in India, during a stay of about seventy years, by preaching the Gospel in all its naked simplicity: they will candidly answer, Not one, not a single man.

“Behold the Nestorians in Travancore; interrogate them; ask them for an account of their success in the work of proselytism in these modern times; ask them whether they are gaining ground, and whether the interests of their ancient mode of worship is improving: they will reply, that so far from this being the case, their congregations, once so flourishing, amounting (according to Gibbon’s account) to 200,000 souls, are now reduced to less than an eighth of this number, and are daily diminishing.

“Behold the Baptist Missionaries at Serampore; inquire what are their scriptural successes on the shores of the Ganges; ask them whether those extremely incorrect versions, already obtained at an immense expense, have produced the sincere conversion of a single pagan; and I am persuaded, that, if they are asked an answer upon their honour and conscience, they will all reply in the negative.”

“III. *Are those Hindoos who profess Christianity respectable for their understanding, their morals, and their condition in life?*”

In answer to this query I must again beg to refer you to the above quotations from the Abbé Dubois. For my own part, I have no personal knowledge of any native converts respectable for their understanding, morals, and condition in life.

“IV. *Of what caste are they generally, and what effect has their profession of Christianity upon their standing?*”

It is reported, and universally believed by the native inhabitants, that the generality, if not all of them, are of low caste, and my acquaintance with the few of them I have met with has in a great degree confirmed me in this belief.

“V. *Are they Christians from inquiry and conviction, or from other motives?*”

The real motives of our actions are very difficult to be discovered. All that I can say on this subject is, that several years ago there was a pretty prevalent report in this part of India, that a native embracing Christianity should be remunerated for his loss of caste by the gift of five hundred rupees, with a country-born Christian woman as his wife ; and while this report had any pretension to credit, several natives offered from time to time to become Christians. The hope of any such recompense being taken away, the old converts find now very few natives inclined to follow their example. This disappointment not only discourages further conversion, but has also induced several Moosulman converts to return to their former faith ; and had Hindoos with equal facility admitted the return of outcasts to their society, a great number of them also would, I suspect, have imitated the conduct of their brother Moosulman converts. In a populous country like Hindoostan, there are thousands of distressed outcasts wandering about, in whom the smallest hope of worldly gain can produce an immediate change of religious profession, and their conversion to Christianity is a matter of indifference to the community at large. About two years ago I stated this circumstance to a Church Missionary who lives in my neighbourhood, and whom I respect for his liberal conduct ; and I even offered to send to that gentleman as many natives as he might wish to convert on condition that he should maintain them at a fixed salary not exceeding eight rupees per month.

“VI. *Of what denomination of Christians have the Missionaries been most successful ; Catholic, Protestant, Episcopalian, Baptist, Trinitarian, Unitarian ?*”

To the best of my belief no denomination of Christians has had any real success in bringing natives of India over to the Christian faith.

“VII. *What is the number of Unitarian Christians, and are they chiefly natives or Europeans ?*”

The Rev. Mr. Adam is the only Unitarian Missionary in

Bengal, and he publicly avowed Unitarianism so late as the latter end of 1821. Notwithstanding the many disadvantages under which he has been labouring, he has brought this system of Christianity into notice in this part of the globe; as previous to that period many did not know that there was such a thing as Unitarianism, and others tried to stigmatize it, in proportion as their prejudices for the corruptions of Christianity prompted them to abuse reason and common sense, without fear of contradiction. Mr. Adam, although he has made no avowed native convert, has already received every countenance from several respectable European gentlemen, and from a great number of the reading part of the native community in Calcutta.

“VIII. *How are they regarded and treated by other Christians? Is it with any peculiar hostility?”*

The manner in which the rest of the Missionaries have treated Mr. Adam, since his avowal of Unitarianism, is indeed opposed to the whole spirit of Christianity. But towards other Unitarians, their conduct in general is similar to that of Roman Catholics towards Protestants.

“IX. *What are the chief causes that have prevented, and that continue to prevent, the reception of Christianity by the natives of India? May much of the want of success be reasonably attributed to the form in which the religion is presented to them?”*

The chief causes which prevent the natives of India from changing their religion are the same as are found in the numerous class of Christians who are unable to give an answer to any man that asketh the reason of the hope they profess, viz. their reliance on the sanctity of the books received among them as revealed authorities, and the variety of prejudices planted in their minds in the early part of life. These are strongly supported by the dread of the loss of caste, the consequence of apostacy, which separates a husband from his wife, a father from his son, and a mother from her daughter. Besides,

the doctrines which the Missionaries maintain and preach are less conformable with reason than those professed by Moosulmans, and in several points are equally absurd with the popular Hindoo creed. Hence there is no rational inducement for either of these tribes to lay aside their respective doctrines, and adopt those held up by the generality of Christians.

“X. *Are any of the causes of failure of such a nature, that it may be in the power of Unitarian Christians to remove them?*”

Unitarian Christianity is not exposed to the last mentioned objections; for even those who are inimical to every religion admit, that the Unitarian system is more conformable to the human understanding than any other known creed. But the other obstacles above-mentioned must remain unshaken, until the natives are enabled by the diffusion of knowledge to estimate, by comparing one religion with another, their respective merits and advantages, and to relinquish their divisions, as destructive of national union as of social enjoyment.

“XI. *Are there any reasons for believing that Christianity, as it is held by Unitarians, would be more readily received by intelligent Hindoos, than as it is held by Trinitarians?*”

In reply to this question, I repeat what I stated in answer to a question of a similar nature, put to me by Mr. Reed, a gentleman of Boston, viz. “The natives of Hindoostan, in common with those of other countries, are divided into two classes, the ignorant and the enlightened. The number of the latter is, I am sorry to say, comparatively very few here: and to these men the idea of a triune-God, a man-God, and also the idea of the appearance of God in the bodily shape of a dove, or that of the blood of God shed for the payment of a debt, seem entirely Heathenish and absurd, and consequently their sincere conversion to [Trinitarian] Christianity must be morally impossible. But they would not scruple to embrace, or at least to encourage, the Unitarian system of Christianity, were it inculcated on them in an intelligible manner. The former class, I mean the ignorant, must be enemies to both systems of Christianity, Trinitarianism

and Unitarianism. As they feel great reluctance in forsaking the deities worshipped by their fathers for foreign Gods, in substituting the blood of God for the water of the Ganges as a purifying substance, so the idea of an invisible Being as the sole object of worship, maintained by Unitarians, is foreign to their understanding. Under these circumstances it would be advisable, in my humble opinion, that one or two, if not more gentlemen, well qualified to teach English literature and science, and noted for their moral conduct, should be employed to cultivate the understandings of the present ignorant generation, and thereby improve their hearts, that the cause of truth may triumph over false religion, and the desired comfort and happiness may be enjoyed by men of all classes."

"XII. *Can any aid be given by Unitarians to the cause of Christianity in India, with a reasonable prospect of success? If any can be given, of what kind, in what way, by what means?"*

In answer, I beg to refer you to my reply to the preceding question, and only add here, that every one who interests himself in behalf of his fellow-creatures, would confidently anticipate the approaching triumph of true religion, should philanthropy induce you and your friends to send to Bengal as many serious and able teachers of European learning and science and Christian morality, unmingled with religious doctrines, as your circumstances may admit, to spread knowledge gratuitously among the native community, in connexion with the Rev. Mr. Adam, whose thorough acquaintance with the language, manners, and prejudices of the natives, renders him well qualified to co-operate with them with every prospect of success.

"XIII. *Would it be of any use to send Unitarian Missionaries with a view to their preaching Christianity for the purpose of converting adult natives?"*

Much good cannot be expected from public preachings at present, on account of the obstacles above-mentioned. It is, however, hoped, that some of the teachers that may be sent out may preach with gradual success in the public place of worship.



“XIV. *Would it be useful to establish Unitarian Missionary Schools for the instruction of the children of natives in the rudiments of a European education, in the English language, in Christian morality, mingling with it very little instruction relative to the doctrines of Christianity, leaving them chiefly or wholly out of view, to be learned afterward from our books and our example?*”

This would be certainly of great use, and this is the only way of improving their understandings, and ultimately meliorating their hearts.

“XV. *Are there many intelligent natives who are willing to learn the languages of Europe, to cultivate its literature, and to make themselves acquainted with our religion as it is found in our books, and to examine the evidences of its truth and divine origin?*”

There are numerous intelligent natives, who thirst after European knowledge and literature, but not many who wish to be made acquainted with the Christian religion and to examine its truth, being chiefly deterred by the difficulty (if not utter impossibility) attached to the acquirement of a correct notion of the tremendous mystical doctrines which the Missionaries ascribe to their religion.

“XVI. *Are there many respectable natives who are willing to have their children educated in the English language and in English learning and arts?*”

The desire of educating children in the English language and in English arts is found even in the lowest classes of the community, and I may be fully justified in saying that two-thirds of the native population of Bengal would be exceedingly glad to see their children educated in English learning.

“XVII. *What benefits have arisen, or are likely to arise, from the translation of the Scriptures into the native languages of the East? Are they read by any who are not already Christians? And are they likely to be read generally even by them? The question is suggested by the representations which have been made, that converts to Christianity are mostly, if not altogether,*

*of the lowest and most ignorant classes of society. Is this representation true ?”*

To the best of my knowledge, no benefit has hitherto arisen from the translation of the Scriptures into the languages of the East, nor can any advantage be expected from the translations in circulation ; they are not read much by those that are not Christians, except by a few whom the Missionaries represent as being “led away by Socinian principles.” As to the character of the converts to Christianity, you will be pleased to refer to the replies to the first, second, third, and fourth queries.

“XVIII. *Will any important impression, favourable to Christianity, ever be made, except by the conversion and through the influence of persons of education, and of the higher classes of society who can read our sacred books in the original, or at least in the English version ?”*

Christianity, when represented in its genuine sense in any language whatever, must make a strong impression on every intelligent mind, especially when introduced by persons of education and respectability.

“XIX. *Are the translations, which have been made faithful, free from sectarian influence as to the expression of Christian doctrine ?”*

To both parts of this query my reply must be in the negative. I at the same time acquit these translators of wilful neglect or intentional perversion. They were, I think, too hasty to engage themselves in so difficult an undertaking.

Ideas, in general, are as differently expressed in the idioms of the East from those of the West, as the East is remote from the West. Greater difficulty, therefore, must be experienced by a native of Europe in communicating European ideas in the idioms of Asia, than in conveying Asiatic ideas into the languages of Europe ; so a native of Asia experiences greater inconvenience in expressing Asiatic ideas in European idioms, than in translating European ideas into an Asiatic language.

About four years ago, the Rev. Mr. Adam, and another

Baptist Missionary, the Rev. Mr. Yates, both well reputed for their oriental and classic acquirements, engaged, in common with myself, to translate the New Testament into Bengallee, and we met twice every week, and had for our guidance all the translations of the Bible, by different authors, which we could procure. Notwithstanding our exertions, we were obliged to leave the accurate translation of several phrases to future consideration, and for my own part I felt discontented with the translation, adopted of several passages, though I tried frequently, when alone at home, to select more eligible expressions, and applied to native friends for their aid for that purpose. I beg to assure you, that I (though a native of this country) do not recollect having engaged myself once, during my life, in so difficult a task, as the translation of the New Testament into Bengallee.

“XX. *Are there any particular parts of India or of the East, where efforts for propagating Christianity, or preparing the way for it, might be made with better hopes than in others?*”

Calcutta, the Capital of the British Empire in India, where the natives are more conversant with English, and frequently associate with European gentlemen, is, in my humble opinion, preferable as a field for such efforts to the rest of Hindoostan, as the native inhabitants of Bengal, in a great degree, follow the example of the opulent natives of Calcutta.

# **THE TYTLER CONTROVERSY.**



A VINDICATION  
OF THE  
INCARNATION OF THE DEITY,  
AS THE COMMON BASIS  
OF  
HINDOOISM AND CHRISTIANITY,  
AGAINST THE SCHISMATIC ATTACKS

OF  
R. TYTLER, ESQ. M. D.

*Surgeon in the Hon. East India Company's Service, Author of "An enquiry into the Origin and Principles of Budaic Sabism," and of "The Substance of a Discourse in Vindication of the Divinity of our Lord," and also, Member of the Asiatic Society.*

BY

RAM DOSS.

CALCUTTA :

*Printed by S. Smith and Co., Hurkaru Press.*

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1823.

## DEDICATION

TO ALL BELIEVERS IN THE INCARNATION OF THE DEITY.

FELLOW-BELIEVERS,

The following Correspondence between the renowned Dr. R. Tytler and myself was partly given to the world through the medium of the *BENGAL HURKARU*; but as the Editor of that Paper refused to admit some of my letters into its pages, and those published were widely separated from each other by being mixed up with various extraneous matters, I have deemed it advisable to have the whole collected together and presented at one view, for general edification.

My object in addressing Dr. Tytler (as will be seen from a perusal of the following pages,) was, that all Believers in the Manifestation of God in the flesh, whether Hindoo or Christian, might unite in support of our Common Cause, and cordially co-operate in our endeavours to check the alarming growth of the Unitarian heresy: but unfortunately my hopes were entirely disappointed, as Dr. Tytler not only refused to repair the breach, I conceived his writings calculated to make, but to my great surprise and regret, in return for my friendly offers of assistance, he applied to me and to my religion the most opprobrious abuse, and treated me as if my Faith were inimical to the tenets of his Creed.

I am, your friend and fellow-believer,

*Calcutta, June 3, 1823.*

RAM DOSS.\*

\* Ram Doss is the name assumed by Ram Mohun Roy in many of his satirical writings. — ED.

A VINDICATION  
OF THE  
INCARNATION OF THE DEITY, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

This Correspondence was occasioned by a passage in a letter of Dr. Tytler's, published in the *BENGAL HURKARU* of the 30th of May 1823, directed against Rammohun Roy, a person who, as is well known, is strongly reprobated by the zealous, both among Hindoos and Christians, for his daring impiety in rejecting the doctrine of Divine Incarnations. But the Doctor while censuring this stubborn Heretic, most unwarrantably introduced contemptuous allusions to the Hindoo Deities, as will be seen from the passage referred to which is here subjoined :—

*Extract from the Hurkaru of May 3rd, 1823.*

He (Rammohun Roy) thus proceeds in the same epistle. “Whether you be a faithful believer in the Divinity of the Holy Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, or of any other mortal man ; or whether a Hindu declares himself a faithful believer in the Divinity of his Holy *Thakoor Trata* RAM, or MUNOO—I feel equally indifferent about these notions.” Here I pause, for the purpose of asking the candid Reader what would have been said, if, at the time Rammohun Roy continued in his belief of Shiba, Vishnu and Gunesa, I had personally addressed a letter to him, replete with vituperation of him and his opinions ? Would it not have been asserted, and very justly, that I was attacking him, and his gods, and wounding the religious feelings of a Hindu ? Yet this *Unitarian*, as he now professes himself, thinks proper to leave the subject of discussion, namely a proposal to hold a “Religious conference,” and tells me flatly that



my belief in the DIVINITY OF THE HOLY SAVIOUR is on a par with a Hindu's belief in his *Thakoor*!!!—Yes, Christian Readers, such is the fact; and when I offer to defend myself from such vile imputations by arguments drawn from those Holy Scriptures to which this Unitarian himself appeals, I am given to understand, that this Reviler of my FAITH, the FAITH OF MY ANCESTORS, will not condescend to listen, unless my reply receives the stamp of orthodoxy from the signature of a Missionary!!!

May 2, 1823.

R. TYTLER.

#### RAM DOSS'S FIRST LETTER TO DR. TYTLER.

The Editor of the *Hurkaru* having refused insertion to the following, it was privately forwarded to Dr. Tytler.

*To Dr. R. Tytler.*

SIR,

I happened to read a letter in the "*Hurkaru*" of the 3rd instant, under the signature of R. Tytler, which has excited my wonder and astonishment. For I had heard that you were not only profoundly versed in the knowledge of the ancients, but intimately acquainted with the learning and opinions of the present age. But I felt quite disappointed when I perceived that you entertained ideas so erroneous respecting the Hindoo religion.

Is there any Hindoo who would be offended at being told by a believer in the INVISIBLE GOD, that this man is indifferent about his (the Hindoo's) faith in the divinity of his Holy THAKOOR and TRATA RAM or MUNOO? We know that these self-conceited sects who profess reverence for only *one* DEITY are apt to express their indifference for the holy INCARNATION of the Divine Essence believed in by Hindoos as well as by Christians; and in fact that the followers of any one religion have little respect for the opinions of those of another. But can this

give concern or surprise to the enlightened and well-informed persons who have seen and conversed with various sects of men?

I am more particularly astonished that a man of your reputed learning and acquirements, should be offended at the mention of the resemblance of your belief in the Divinity of Jesus Christ with a Hindoo's belief in his Thakoor, because you ought to know that our religious faith and yours are founded on the same sacred basis, viz, the MANIFESTATION OF GOD IN THE FLESH, without any restriction to a dark or fair complexion, large or small stature, long or short hair. You cannot surely be ignorant that the Divine RAM was the reputed son of Dushuruth, of the offspring of Bhuggeeruth, of the tribe of Rughoo, as Jesus was the reputed son of Joseph, of the House of David, of the Tribe of Judah. RAM was the King of the Rughoos and of Foreigners, while in like manner JESUS was King of the Jews and Gentiles. Both are stated in the respective sacred books handed down to us, to have performed very wonderful miracles and both ascended up to Heaven. Both were tempted by the Devil while on the earth, and both have been worshipped by millions up to the present day. Since God can be born of the Tribe of Judah, how, I ask, is it impossible that he should be born of the Tribe of Rughoo, or of any other nation or race of men? And as the human form and feelings of RAM afford sceptics no good argument against his omnipresent and divine nature, it must be evident to you that this deluded sect of Unitarianism can lay no stress on the human form and feelings of Jesus Christ as disproving his divinity.

When therefore the resemblance is so very striking, and ought to be known to you as well as to every other man having the least pretensions to an acquaintance with the learning and religion of the Natives of India,—how is it possible that you can feel offended at the mention of a fact so notorious? You may perhaps urge, that there is a wide difference between a belief in THREE Persons in the Godhead as maintained by you, and a belief in three hundred and thirty millions of Persons in the

Godhead, entertained by the Hindoos. But as all such numerical objections are founded on the frail basis of human reason, which we well know is fallible, you must admit that the same omnipotence, which can make THREE ONE and ONE THREE, can equally reconcile the UNITY and PLURALITY of three hundred and thirty millions, both being supported by a sublime mystery which far transcends all human comprehension.

The vain and narrow-minded believers in *one* INVISIBLE GOD accuse the followers of the Trinity, as well as us the sincere worshippers of Ram and other Divine Incarnations, of being Idolaters ; and policy therefore might have suggested to you the propriety of maintaining a good understanding and brotherhood among all who have correct notions of the manifestation of God in the flesh, that we may cordially join and go hand in hand, in opposing, and, if possible, extirpating the abominable notion of a SINGLE GOD, which strikes equally at the root of Hindooism and Christianity. However, it is not too late for you to reflect on your indiscretion, and atone for it by expressing your regret at having written and published any thing calculated to create dissension among the worshippers of Divine Incarnations.

I am, Sir,  
Your most obedient Servant,  
RAM DOSS.

DR. TYTLER'S REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

*To Ram Doss.*

I have received your letter and beg you to receive my best thanks, for the trouble you have put yourself to, in sending it to me. It was my intention this evening to have proved that *Hindu Idolatry* and *Unitarianism* are the same, and that they both proceed from the *Devil*. Unfortunately Mr. Robison, in consequence of the number who were anxious to attend, has

requested me to postpone the meeting, to which of course I have acceded. But I am ready,—MIND ME, READY,—to meet you and your runnagate friend Rammohun Roy whenever you please, in public and private discussion, and let you know what a humble individual unsupported can do, armed with no other weapon than the sharp sword of the Gospel, in bringing to light the hidden works of darkness, which are at present displayed in the *damnable* Heresy of *Unitarianism* of which you are the wretched tool. But neither you, Rammohun Roy, nor the second fallen ADAM dare meet me because you fear the WORD of TRUTH.

Your inveterate and determined

foe in the LORD,

May 6th, 1823.

(Signed) R. TYTLER.

RAM DOSS'S REPLY TO A REMARK OF THE EDITOR OF  
THE BENGAL HURKARU.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru.*

SIR,

After publishing in your Paper of the 3rd instant Dr. Tytler's letter, throwing out offensive insinuations against the Hindoo Religion, as unworthy to be compared with the Christian, I am truly astonished at your refusal to insert my very friendly reply and expostulation with him for the error and indiscretion into which he has fallen, and that you moreover defend him in the following words: "We would hint to Ram Doss that there is "in our opinion a wide difference between the belief which "maintains God to have appeared in the *Flesh* and that of the "Hindoo who believes the appearance of the omnipotent Being "in the shape of a *Thakoor*, which if we are not mistaken, is "composed of stone, metal or wood."

I must remark, first, on the total unacquaintance, you have displayed, with the Hindoo Religion, notwithstanding your residence in the capital of Bengal, in which however you are more excusable than Dr. Tytler, considering his high pretensions to

learning. Can you find a single Hindoo in the whole of India, who imagines that the divine Ram, the son of Dushuruth by Koushilya his mother according to the flesh, was composed either of wood, stone or metal? If you can find even one, there may be some excuse for your mistake in supposing, what is so wide of the fact. You may, of course, find numerous consecrated images or statues of the Holy Ram, in the Hindoo temples, formed of wood and other materials, placed there for the pious purpose of attracting the attention of Devotees to that Divine Incarnation,—although many good Hindoos do not consider such representations as necessary, and worship Ram directly without the intervention of any sensible object. But can you suppose for a moment that a model or picture of any person, whether divine or human, can identify that being with such representation or convert the original existence into the same materials? If this were the case, then the number of men so unfortunate as to have statues or portraits of themselves made, must lose their real essence—their original elements necessarily degenerating into stone, or paint and canvass.

But it is indisputable that neither the image of the Holy Jesus in Roman Catholic Churches, nor the representations of the Divine Ram in the Hindoo Temples, are identified with either of those sacred persons.

As you have refused to publish my letter in answer to Dr. Tytler's attack, I shall take an opportunity of sending it directly to himself for his consideration and reply, and purpose very soon laying this controversy before the public through some other channel with proper mention of your partial conduct, in circulating Dr. Tytler's insulting insinuations against the Hindoo Religion and withholding my answer thereto for its vindication. I expect you will kindly insert this letter in your Paper of tomorrow along with a justification of your own observations of this morning.

I am, Sir, your most obedient Servant,  
RAM DOSS.

REMARKS OF THE EDITOR RELATIVE TO THE  
FOREGOING.

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*(Contained in the Bengal Hurkaru of the 8th May.)*

In our subsequent pages will be found a letter signed Ram Doss, which we insert with pleasure, with a desire of convincing him that we are really impartial in our views of the subject of which it treats. In explanation of our refusal to insert the former letter of Ram Doss, we owe it to him to say that although it justly deserves the appellation of a "very friendly reply" and although it was written with much ability, yet it appeared to us to overstep the limits we have prescribed to ourselves, by entering too far into the subject of the original dispute between the two classes of religious professors, instead of being confined to the discussion of the subject between Ram Mohun Roy and Dr. Tytler, namely the right of the latter to demand, and of the former to afford, facilities for the purpose of the discussion of the point at issue between them. It was under these circumstances and with this feeling that we declined to insert RAM DOSS's communication, and we beg to assure him that it was not from any disrespect to him, or partiality for Dr. Tytler or his doctrines.

Having disposed of this part of the subject, we trust, to the satisfaction of RAM DOSS, we shall simply remark on the other, that we never intended to intimate that any sensible Hindoo could for one moment suppose that God was personally present in an image of brass, stone or metal; but we have no hesitation in asserting that such an opinion does prevail, not only among the Hindoos, but amongst the ignorant of all classes whose religious faith prescribes the worship of images as the medium of access to the Deity. We really ought not to enter on the discussion of any of the points connected with the religious worship of the Hindoos, as we have had but very few opportunities of making ourselves acquainted with them, and if we are now in any error on

these subjects, we trust that RAM DOSS will attribute it to the causes which we have thus explained, and not to any feeling of partiality towards Dr. Tytler, or of misrepresentation of the objects of his own worship.

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RAM DOSS'S FIRST CHALLENGE TO DR. R. TYTLER.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru.*

SIR,

Being disappointed in my just expectation of having my answer to Dr. Tytler's insinuations inserted in your Paper, I yesterday sent it to the Doctor himself for his consideration ; but he avoids making a reply thereto, and in answer to my arguments, merely returns abuse against me, and likewise against our common enemies, the Unitarians, for which last, I, of course, care nothing.

I take this opportunity of informing the Public that this Goliath, notwithstanding his high pretensions to learning, and presumption in setting himself up as the champion of Christianity, shrinks from the defence of the charges he has brought against Hindooism, and that he refuses to co-operate with me in opposing Unitarianism, although he declares in his note to me that it is a system of damnable heresy proceeding from the Devil.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

May 7, 1823.

RAM DOSS.

DR. TYTLER'S REPLY TO RAM DOSS.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru.*

SIR,

As I do not intend this letter to have any direct reference to the subject of religious discussion, you will oblige me by

giving it insertion into the columns of the *Hurkaru*. Two days ago I received an Epistle subscribed Ram Doss, which I was led to conclude must have been written by some Unitarian under a pseudonymous signature. But it appears from a letter, which is published in your paper of this day, I may have been mistaken ; and I am, therefore, anxious to inform Ram Doss, if he be a real person, that I consider there is no book at present in possession of *Hindus*,—the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayuna* not excepted,—of higher antiquity than the entrance of the *Muslimans* into India,—say about 800 years from the present period. The legends attached to the *Avatars* are merely perverted, and corrupted copies of the Holy Scriptures in the possession of Christians, and have no particular relation to the ancient religion, whatever it may have been, of the inhabitants of this country. Should Ram Doss therefore be a real person, and wish to obtain information on those topics, it will afford me sincere pleasure to meet him, either at my own house or any other he may appoint, at some hour convenient to us both, for the purpose of explaining the arguments which support the views, I have taken, of the *modernness* of the religious system at present followed by the *Hindus*.

Your obedient Servant.

May 8, 1823.

R. TYTLER.

RAM DOSS'S SECOND CHALLENGE TO DR. TYTLER.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru.*

SIR,

Dr. Tytler having been unable to make a direct reply to the arguments conveyed in my letter to him dated the 5th instant, has taken refuge in your Paper, knowing very well that he would prevail upon you to insert every assertion that he might make against our Sacred Books and Holy Incarnations, and that you as a Christian would excuse yourself for declining to give publicity to my retaliation upon him.



I therefore challenge him through your Pages for a reply to my arguments in the shape of a letter, so that I may endeavour through some other means to publish all our correspondence for the consideration and judgment of the Public.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,  
*May 9th, 1823.* RAM DOSS.

#### DR. TYTLER'S REPLY TO RAM DOSS.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru.*

SIR,

Your Correspondent Ram Doss in "informing the public," that I consider "Unitarianism a system of damnable heresy proceeding from the Devil," has forgot to mention that such was also my expressed opinion to him respecting the superstitions to which he is so extremely partial. Under those circumstances is it reasonable to expect, I will allow him to *co-operate* with me, as he calls it, "against our common enemies," when in fact I maintain Unitarianism to be nothing more than a new name for Hindu Idolatry?

Your obedient Servant,  
*Calcutta, May 10, 1823.* R. TYTLER.

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#### RAM DOSS'S THIRD CHALLENGE TO DR. TYTLER.

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*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru.*

SIR,

One of the objects of my letter to Dr. Tytler, was to solicit the co-operation of the Doctor in opposing Unitarians. The other, to refute his insinuations against Hindooism and prove that it was founded on the same sacred basis (the Manifestation of God in the flesh) with Doctor Tytler's own Faith.

From the Doctor's letter in your paper of this morning, I see he positively shrinks from entering the field with me against Unitarianism, leaving me thus to encounter the danger and reap the glory single-handed.

I now request to be informed through the medium of your paper, whether the Doctor also flinches from justifying his insinuations against the Hindoo Religion, and replying to my letter proving Hindooism and Christianity to rest on the same sacred foundation.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,  
*May 12, 1823.* RAM DOSS.

DR. TYTLER'S REPLY TO RAM DOSS.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru.*

SIR,

The assertion of Ram Doss, that "I shrink from entering the field against Unitarianism, leaving him thus to encounter the danger and reap the glory single-handed," when all Calcutta is acquainted with the contrary, and no one better than the Unitarians themselves, is really too absurd to require notice.

In support of what this writer calls "my insinuations against the Hindu Religion," I refer him to the histories of Buddha, Saluvahana, and Chrishna, and maintain they comprise nothing more than perverted copies of Christianity. Let him shew the reverse if he can.

Your obedient Servant,  
*Calcutta, May 13, 1823.* R. TYTLER.

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RAM DOSS'S REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru.*

SIR,

You are aware that I have three times through the medium

of your paper, called upon Dr. Tytler, to reply to the ARGUMENTS contained in the letter, forwarded to him by me and the receipt of which he acknowledged in a *torrent of abuse*, and that he has, as often as thus publicly called upon, returned an evasive answer, which proves that he inwardly shrinks from the combat.

With a view to defend his offensive insinuations, against Hindooism, he now refers me to the Histories of Buddha (the head of a tribe inimical to Hindooism,) Saluvahana (an Indian Prince) and Chrishna, a divine Incarnation, without attempting to bring forward from these any thing against the justness of my arguments. I now, Sir, beg leave to appeal to you, whether if any Hindoo were to make insinuations against the Christian Religion, when called to defend them, he would be justified in merely referring Christians to the Books of the Jews (a tribe equally inimical to Christianity,) or Gibbon's History of the Roman Empire, or to a whole History of Jesus Christ, without adducing any particular passage. I now for the FOURTH and last time call upon the Doctor, either to answer precisely my arguments already in his possession, or confess publicly that he is totally unable to justify his insinuations against a Religion founded on the Sacred basis of the manifestation of God in the flesh, and that knowing the badness of his cause, he shrinks from meeting me on the fair field of *Regular Argument*, instead of which he has given me only abuse. •

I have nothing to say respecting his mode of opposing our Common enemies, the Unitarians, and grant him freely the honour of his individual exertions. Notwithstanding I think it proper to suggest the expediency of Common believers in Divine Incarnations (like the Doctor and myself) joining hand in hand in opposing our inveterate enemy. Our chance of success must be greater when our Force is united, than when it is divided.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

May 14, 1823.

RAM DOSS.

## DR. TYTLER'S REPLY TO RAM DOSS.

This Reply was in a Postscript to a Letter of Dr. Tytler's (dated May 15,) addressed to the Editor of *BENGAL HURKARU*, and published on that Paper of the 16th May.

"I request" (said the Doctor) "to be informed by your sapient correspondent Ram Doss, in what manner he proves Buddha to be 'the head of a tribe inimical to Hindooism.'"

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 RAM DOSS'S REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru.*

SIR,

The only reply which Dr. Tytler makes to my Fourth Challenge published in your paper yesterday is as follows, viz.—

"P. S. I request to be informed by your sapient correspondent Ram Doss in what manner he proves Buddha to be 'the head of a tribe inimical to Hindooism.'"

I now call on the Public to pronounce whether this query can be considered as a reply to the arguments contained in my letter forwarded to the Doctor, repelling his offensive insinuations and proving that Hindooism and Christianity are founded on the same basis? or if it be not evidently a mere pretence for evading the question? Fully warranted in anticipating a verdict in my favor, I ask what opinion will the world form of a man who with some pretensions to learning and great professions of Religion, while defying the whole world in the field of Religious discussion, first utters degrading insinuations against a Faith founded on exactly the same basis as his own, and then when repeatedly challenged to *justify* this conduct resorts to such *Shuffling* and *Evasion*? However to oblige the Doctor as a fellow-believer in, and worshipper of, Divine Incarnations, I will inform him (although it has no bearing on the question) that Buddha or Booddha, is the head of the sect of *Bouddhus*, who derive their name from him in the same manner as Christians do from

Christ. That this sect is inimical to Hindooism is proved by the fact that they deny the existence of a Creator of the Universe, in whom the Hindoos believe, and also despise many of the Gods worshipped by the latter. There are hundreds of works published by them against each other which are in general circulation. But all this has nothing to do with my arguments which the Doctor by *evading* virtually *confesses* he is *unable* to answer. I therefore *denounce* him a *defamer* of Hindooism, a religion of the principles of which he is (or at least appears to be) totally ignorant.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

Friday, 16th May, 1823.

RAM DOSS.

#### DR. TYTLER'S REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

*Published in the Hurkaru of May 22nd.*

The sapient Ram Doss, now changes his tone,—and tells us the *Bouddhists* “despise *many* of the Gods worshipped by the Hindoos.” It hence follows that *some* of the Hindoo deities must be objects of their adoration. And yet this writer asserts Buddha to be the “head of a tribe inimical to Hindooism,” while his own statement proves Hindoo Gods to be the objects of *Buddhaic* veneration!!

#### RAM DOSS'S REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru.*

SIR,

In your paper of this day, Dr. Tytler notices my *fifth* Challenge, calling upon him to answer the arguments contained in my letter forwarded to him some weeks ago, repelling his offensive insinuations against Hindooism. But how does he justify

himself? "The sapient Ram Doss" (says he) "now changes his tone and tells us the Buddhists 'despise *many* of the Gods worshipped by the Hindoos.' It hence follows that *some* of the Hindoo deities must be objects of their adoration. And yet this writer asserts Buddha to be the 'head of a tribe inimical to Hindooism,' while his own statement proves Hindoo Gods to be the objects of *Buddhaic* veneration."

I now beg to call the attention of the Public, Christians and not Christians, to the above passage, and request them to pronounce whether the Doctor thereby proves that Hindooism cannot (as he insinuated) be compared with Christianity, or refutes my position, that these two religions are founded on the same sacred basis, viz. the Manifestation of God in the Flesh? And I now call on the world to judge, whether the person who can resort to such shuffling and evasion have any just claim to the character of a man of learning, or a man of probity? What name is bestowed on the man who thus shrinks from meeting the arguments of his opponent fairly and candidly, and trembling at the force of truth, is glad to make his escape by any mean subterfuge?

It is almost self-degradation or a prostitution of reason to treat his last remark, above quoted, as worthy of notice, viz. that as "Buddhists despise *many* of the Gods worshipped by the Hindoos, it hence follows that *some* of the Hindoo deities MUST be subjects of their "adoration"—*Indeed!!* In what school of *wisdom* did the learned Doctor acquire his Logic? Although I despise or dislike several members of a family, is this a proof that I MUST adore the rest? May I not regard the rest with indifference, or be unacquainted with them? But granting even that Buddhists do worship some of the Hindoo Gods, while they despise others, may they not still be inimical to Hindooism? For, don't the Jews despise one of the Christian Gods, worship another, and are indifferent to a third, and yet are they not inveterate enemies of Christianity?

I now only wish to know from what College or University

the Doctor procured a Certificate, authorizing him to assume the Title of M. D. and whether that seat of Learning in the distribution of its *Academic Honors* usually selects such worthy objects.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

Thursday, 22nd May, 1823.

RAM DOSS.

P. S. I congratulate the Doctor on his victory (as reported by himself in your paper of to-day) over our common enemies the Unitarians (these deluded deniers of Divine Incarnations), and I regret I was not present to share in the triumph. R. D.

*Dr. Tytler being now it appears completely silenced, a Friend, under the signature of A Christian, came forward to his assistance in the following Letter.*

#### LETTER OF A CHRISTIAN TO RAM DOSS.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru.*

SIR,

It is gratifying to the lovers of science, to behold a few intelligent Hindoos emerging from the degraded ignorance and shameful superstition, in which their fathers for so many centuries have been buried. It is no less pleasing to the friends of humanity, to find that one of the most learned of the Hindoo Brahmuns has not only abandoned the doctrine which countenances the cruel and abominable practice of matricide, but also ably confuted his compeers, who were advocates for having human victims sacrificed to Moloch.

On the other hand it is a sad contemplation, that these very individuals who are indebted to Christians for the civil liberty they enjoy, as well as for the rays of intelligence, now beginning to dawn on them, should in the most ungenerous manner insult their benefactors, by endeavouring to degrade their religion, for no other reason, but because they cannot comprehend its sublime Mysteries.

My attention has been particularly attracted to this subject by a letter signed "RAM DOSS" which appeared in your paper of yesterday.

This Hindoo with whom I have no personal acquaintance had the arrogance to lay before the public the following passage "I now call on the *public* to pronounce whether this query can be considered as a reply to the arguments contained in my letter forwarded to the Doctor, repelling his offensive insinuations and proving that *Hindooism and Christianity are founded on the same basis?*" Ram Doss here appeals to the public, and he will of course grant me the same privilege. I will therefore ask,—Christian Readers, are you so far degraded by Asiatic effeminacy as to behold with indifference your holy and immaculate RELIGION thus degraded by having it placed on an equality with Hindooism—with rank idolatry—with disgraceful ignorance and shameful superstition?

Will Ram Doss or his associates be pleased to inform me, if the *Incarnation of his God* was foretold by Prophets through a period of four thousand years? Or will he demonstrate the mission or divine incarnation of his *Deity* by incontestable and stupendous miracles such as Christ wrought? Will he assert that the doctrine of Hindooism is as pure and undefiled as that of Christianity? Or in fine, will he prove that the human character has ever been exalted by any religious system so much as by the sweet influence of Christianity?

If RAM DOSS is not able satisfactorily to clear up a single point of what I now submit to his serious consideration, it is manifest, that in common civility, he should refrain from insulting Christians by putting their religion on a comparison with Hindooism.

Ram Mohun Roy, who appears to me to be the most learned of the Hindoos, is so far from making such odious and offensive remarks, that he apparently gives the preference to Christianity. Vide, his First Appeal entitled "the precepts of Christ the guide to peace and happiness." I regret the learned Brahmun was



interrupted by the intemperate zeal of the Baptists in the praiseworthy course he intended to have pursued as set forth in his preface to the work above alluded to.

I conclude by recommending your sapient Correspondent RAM DOSS to employ his time and talents in laudable and pious endeavours to reclaim his Countrymen from *idolatry*, rather than attempt to investigate mysteries that are far above the weak comprehensions of man. I also recommend him to beware of such Christians as are carried away with every wind of doctrine, and who "know not what they do."

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

A CHRISTIAN.

#### RAM DOSS'S REPLY TO THE CHRISTIAN.

[Published in a Pamphlet containing an account of Dr. Tytler's Lecture circulated with the Bengal Hurkaru Newspaper.]

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru.*

SIR,

I regret to observe by the Letter in your Paper of this morning signed "A Christian," that in repelling the offensive insinuations of Dr. Tytler against the Hindoo Religion, I am considered by one of the Christian denomination as endeavouring to degrade his "Faith."

It is well known to you, Sir, that I privately sent a Letter to the Doctor, refuting his position in the most friendly, calm, and argumentative manner, to which he returned a note loading me with the grossest abuse; consequently I thought myself justified in challenging him publicly to make a reply to my arguments. The *Christian* therefore cannot conceal from himself that it is *I* and *my* Faith which have been vilified and abused and that in return, I have offered *not* insult, but merely reason

and argument ; for it cannot be considered insult for a man to say that another religion is founded on the same basis with his own, which he believes to be all that is venerable and sacred.

If by the "Ray of Intelligence" for which the *Christian* says we are indebted to the English, he means the introduction of useful mechanical arts, I am ready to express my assent and also my gratitude ; but with respect to *Science, Literature, or Religion*, I do not acknowledge that we are placed under any obligation. For by a reference to History it may be proved that the World was indebted to *our ancestors* for the first dawn of knowledge, which sprung up in the East, and thanks to the Goddess of Wisdom, we have still a philosophical and copious language of our own, which distinguishes us from other nations who cannot express scientific or abstract ideas without borrowing the language of foreigners.

Ram Mohun Roy's abandonment of Hindoo doctrines (as "A Christian" mentions) cannot prove them to be erroneous ; no more than the rejection of the Christian Religion by hundreds of persons who were originally Christians and more learned than Ram Mohun Roy, proves the fallacy of Christianity. We Hindoos regard him in the same light as Christians do Hume, Voltaire, Gibbon and other sceptics.

Before "A Christian" indulged in a tirade about persons being "degraded by *Asiatic* effeminacy" he should have recollected that almost all the ancient prophets and patriarchs venerated by Christians, nay even Jesus Christ himself, a Divine Incarnation and the *founder* of the Christian Faith, were ASIATICS, so that if a Christian thinks it degrading to be born or to reside in *Asia*, he directly reflects upon them.

First.—The *Christian* demands "Will Ram Doss or his associates be pleased to inform me, if the *Incarnation of his God* was foretold by Prophets through a period of four thousand years ?" I answer in the affirmative. The Incarnation of *Ram* was foretold in the works of many holy and inspired men for more than 4000 years previous to the event, in the most

precise and intelligible language ; not in those ambiguous and equivocal terms found in the *Old Testament*, respecting the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, an ambiguity which it is well known has afforded our common enemies, the Unitarians, a handle for raising a doubt of Jesus Christ being a real Manifestation of God in the flesh.

Secondly.—The *Christian* demands of RAM DOSS “Will he demonstrate the mission or divine incarnation of his deity by incontestable and stupendous miracles such as Christ wrought?” I answer, Yes : The divine Ram performed miracles more stupendous, not before multitudes of ignorant people only, but in the presence of Princes and of thousands of learned men, and of those who were inimical to Hindooism. I admit that the Jeins and other unbelievers ascribed Ram’s miraculous power to a Demoniactal Spirit, in the same manner as the Jews attributed the miracles of Jesus to the power of Beelzebub ; but neither of these objections are worthy of notice from believers in Divine Incarnations, since the performance of the miracles themselves is incontestably proved by tradition.

Thirdly.—The *Christian* asks “Will he (Ram Doss) assert that the Doctrine of Hindooism is as pure and undefiled as that of Christianity?” Undoubtedly, such is my assertion : and an English translation of the Vedant as well as of Munoo (which contains the essence of the whole Veds) being before the public, I call on all reflecting men to compare the two religions together and point out in what respect the one excels the other in purity ? Should the *Christian* attempt to ridicule some part of the ritual of the Veds I shall of course feel myself justified in referring to ceremonies of a similar character in the Christian Scriptures ; and if he dwell on the corrupt notions introduced into Hindooism in more modern times, I shall also remind him of the corruptions introduced by various sects into Christianity. But *A Christian* must know very well that such corruptions cannot detract from the excellence of Genuine Religions themselves.

Fourthly.—The *Christian* asks, “Will he (Ram Doss) prove that the human character has ever been exalted by any system of religion so much as by the sweet influence of Christianity.” In reply, I appeal to History, and call upon the *Christian* to mention any religion on the face of the earth that has been the cause of so much war and bloodshed, cruelty and oppression, for so many hundred years as this whose “*sweet influence*” he celebrates.

That propriety of conduct found among the better sort of Christians is entirely owing to the superior education they have enjoyed ; a proof of which is, that others of the same rank in society, although not believers in Christianity, are distinguished by equal propriety of conduct, which is not the case with the most firm believers, if destitute of Education or without the means of improvement by mixing in company with persons better instructed than themselves.

It is unjust in the *Christian* to quarrel with Hindoos because (he says) they cannot comprehend the sublime mystery of his Religion, since he is equally unable to comprehend the sublime mysteries of ours, and, since both these mysteries equally transcend the human understanding, one cannot be preferred to the other.

Let us however return to the main question, viz. that THE INCARNATION OF THE DEITY IS THE COMMON BASIS OF HINDOOISM AND CHRISTIANITY. If the manifestation of God in the flesh is possible, such possibility cannot reasonably be confined to Judea or Uyodhya, for God has undoubtedly the power of manifesting himself in either country and of assuming any colour or name he pleases. If it is impossible, as our common enemies, the Unitarians, contend, such impossibility must extend to all places and persons. I trust therefore the *Christian* will reflect with great seriousness on this subject and will be kind enough to let me know the result.

I am, Sir, your most obedient Servant,

Calcutta, May 23, 1823.

RAM DOSS.

*Ram Doss having heard nothing more publicly or privately from Dr. Tytler or "A Christian" the correspondence here concluded, and the arguments adduced in vindication of the Incarnation of the Deity as the Common Basis of Hindooism and Christianity consequently remain unanswered.\**

\* This controversy began on the 3rd of May and ended on the 23rd of May 1823. The whole was published in the form of a pamphlet on the 3rd of June. After the publication of this pamphlet, the dispute was renewed, but this later controversy (which was carried on in the *India Gazette* and the *Advertiser* from June 12th to June 29th, and was published in a pamphlet in July 14th) we have thought fit not to publish, as it is composed only of some trifling letters. We only give below the introduction by the Rajah to this second pamphlet:—

"After the foregoing pages had been issued from the press, Dr. Tytler, evidently ashamed to confess his defeat, began again in the public prints to assign various excuses for his not having answered me. These, with the replies they called forth, are now collected together that the Public may be further enabled to appreciate the character and conduct of this Reviler of Hindooism. Although the Doctor carried the correspondence from the Newspapers, where both parties might expect fair play and their communications to be inserted free of charge, to the *Advertiser* of his own Publisher in which the arguments of his opponent could not find admission without payment; even under these unfavourable circumstances I continued the controversy, till Mr. Crichton, the Doctor's Publisher, refused to insert one of my communications sent him on Sunday the 29th June, on the groundless pretence that Dr. Tytler *had left Calcutta* and therefore could not answer it; but this collusion between him and his Publisher instead of enabling him to retreat with honor, will only render his final discomfiture the more inglorious.

*Calcutta, July 14th, 1823.*

RAM DOSS."

—ED.

**A D I A L O G U E**  
**BETWEEN**  
**A MISSIONARY**  
**AND**  
**THREE CHINESE CONVERTS.**



## A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

A MISSIONARY AND THREE CHINESE CONVERTS.

*Missionary.* How many Gods are there, my brethren ?

*1st. Convert.* Three.

*2nd. Convert.* Two.

*3rd. Convert.* None.

*Missionary.* Horrid ! These answers are from the Devil.

*All.* We know not where you got the religion which you have taught us, but thus you have taught us.

*Missionary.* Blasphemers !

*All.* We have heard you with patience, nor ever thought of crying out against you, how much so ever you surprised us by your doctrine.

*Missionary.* (Recovering himself and addressing the 1st. convert.) Come, come, recollect : how can you imagine that there are three Gods ?

*1st. Convert.* You told me there was God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and by my Swanpan I find that one and one and one are three.

*Missionary.* O ! I see your blunder. You remember but half the lesson. I told you also that these Three are One.

*1st. Convert.* I know you did, but I thought you had forgotten yourself, and concluded that you spoke the truth at first.

*Missionary.* O no ! You must believe not only that there are Three persons, each God, and equal in power and glory, but also, that these Three are One.

*1st. Convert.* That is impossible. In China we do not believe contradictions.



*Missionary.* Brother ! It is a mystery.

*1st. Convert.* What is that, pray ?

*Missionary.* It is—it is—I know not what to say to you, except that it is something which you cannot possibly comprehend.

*1st. Convert.* (Smiling.) And is it this that you have been sent 10,000 miles to teach ?

*Missionary.* O the power of carnal reason ! Surely, some Socinian has been doing the Devil's work in China. But (turning to the 2nd convert,) how could you imagine, there are two Gods ?

*2nd. Convert.* I thought there were many more till you came and lessened the number.

*Missionary.* Have I ever told you that there are two Gods ? (Aside.) The stupidity of this people makes me almost despair.

*2nd. Convert.* True, you have not said in so many words that there are two Gods, but you have said what implies it.

*Missionary.* Then, you have been tempted to reason upon this mystery.

*2nd. Convert.* We Chinese are wont to put things together, and to come at truth by comparison. Thus you said there were three persons that were each perfect God, and then you said that one of these persons died in one of the countries of the West, a long while ago ; and I therefore concluded the present number to be two.

*Missionary.* Astonishing depravity ! O the depths of Satan ! It is in vain to reason with these poor benighted creatures. But (addressing the 3rd convert) perverse as your two brethren are, you appear worse than they : what can you possibly mean by answering that there are no Gods ?

*3rd. Convert.* I heard you talk of three, but I paid more particular attention to what you said on the point of there being only one. This I could understand ; the other I could not ; and as my belief never reaches above my understanding (for you know I am no learned Mandarin) I set it down in

my mind that there was but one God, and that you take your name of Christian from him.

*Missionary.* There is something in this ; but I am more and more astonished at your answer—"none."

*3rd. Convert.* (Taking up the Swanpan.) Here is one. I remove it. There is none.

*Missionary.* How can this apply ?

*3rd. Convert.* Our minds are not like yours in the West, or you would not ask me. You told me again and again, that there never was but one God, that Christ was the true God, and that a nation of merchants living at the head of the Arabian gulf, put him to death upon a tree, about eighteen hundred years ago. Believing you, what other answer could I give than "None" ?

*Missionary.* I must pray for you, for you all deny the true faith, and living and dying thus, you will without doubt perish everlastingly.

*1st. Convert.* Cong-foo-tse, our revered master, says that bad temper always turns reason out of doors, and that when men begin to curse, the Good Spirit of the universe abandons their hearts.

*2nd. Convert.* You must be angry with yourself and not with us, for you have been teaching us at different times doctrines as contradictory as those of Cong-foo-tse and Budha. The immortal emperor Sinchong has said that he is not to be numbered with wise men, nor to have a name in the hall of ancestors, who undertakes a voyage without making up his mind to its purpose, and preparing himself to give a clear and kind answer to the question of a stranger.

*3rd. Convert.* These rebukes are just : but Ter-whangtee says, in his golden words, that mirth is better than rice. You came, it seems, to bring us a new riddle : but while we thank you, we beg to inform you that Kienlong, our late celestial emperor, has supplied us with a plentiful store, much more entertaining than yours ; and when you can read as well as speak

our divine language, we recommend to you his delectable history of the Mantchoo Tartar, that pretended to be inspired by the Grand Lama, but could never be made to comprehend the Swanpan.

TRANSLATION  
OF A  
CONFERENCE  
BETWEEN  
AN ADVOCATE FOR, AND AN OPPONENT OF,  
THE PRACTICE OF  
BURNING WIDOWS ALIVE;  
FROM THE  
ORIGINAL BUNGLA.

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CALCUTTA :

1818.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE little tract, of which the following is a literal translation, originally written in Bungla, has been for several weeks past in extensive circulation in those parts of the country where the practice of Widows burning themselves on the pile of their Husbands is most prevalent. An idea that the arguments it contains might tend to alter the notions that some European gentlemen entertain on this subject, has induced the Writer to lay it before the British Public also in its present dress,

*November 30, 1818.*

CONFERENCE  
BETWEEN  
AN ADVOCATE FOR, AND AN OPPONENT OF,  
THE PRACTICE OF  
BURNING WIDOWS ALIVE.

*Advocate.* I AM surprised that you endeavour to oppose the practice of Concremation and Posteremation of Widows,\* as long observed in this country.

*Opponent.* Those who have no reliance on the Shastru, and those who take delight in the self-destruction of women, may well wonder that we should oppose that suicide which is forbidden by all the Shastrus, and by every race of men.

*Advocate.* You have made an improper assertion in alleging that Concremation and Posteremation are forbidden by the Shastrus. Hear what Ungira and other saints have said on this subject :

“That woman who, on the death of her husband, ascends the burning pile with him, is exalted to heaven, as equal to Uroondhooti. (1)

“She who follows her husband to another world, shall dwell in a region of joy for so many years as there are hairs in the human body, or thirty-five millions. (2)

\* When a widow is absent from her husband at the time of his death, she may in certain cases burn herself along with some relic representing the deceased. This practice is called Unoomurun or Posteremation.

(1) सः

(2) तिस्रः कोटाईकोटी च याति  
सा स्वर्गे भर्तार

“As a serpent-catcher forcibly draws a snake from his hole, thus raising her husband by her power, she enjoys delight along with him. (3)

“The woman who follows her husband expiates the sins of three races ; her father’s line, her mother’s line, and the family of him to whom she was given a virgin. (4)

“There possessing her husband as her chiefest good, herself the best of women, enjoying the highest delights, she partakes of bliss with her husband as long as fourteen Indrus reign. (5)

“Even though the man had slain a Brahmun, or returned evil for good, or killed an intimate friend, the woman expiates those crimes. (6)

“There is no other way known for a virtuous woman except ascending the pile of her husband. It should be understood that there is no other duty whatever after the death of her husband.” (7)

Hear also what Vyas has written in the parable of the pigeon :

“A pigeon, devoted to her husband, after his death entered the flames, and ascending to heaven, she there found her husband.” (8)

And hear Hareet’s words :

“As long as a woman shall not burn herself after her

(3) व्याख्ययाहो यथा व्यालं बलादुद्धरते विस्त्रात् ।  
तद्वत् भर्तारमादाय तेनैव सह भोदते ॥

(4) मातृकं पेटकञ्चैव यव कन्या प्रदीयते ।  
पुनाति चिकुलं साध्वी भर्तारं यानुगच्छति ॥

(5) तत्र सा भर्तृ परमा परा परमलालसा ।  
क्रीडते पतिना सार्धं यावदिन्द्रा यतुर्ह्य ॥

(6) ब्रह्मघ्नोवा कृतघ्नोवा मित्रघ्नोवापि मानवः ।  
तं वै पुनाति सा नारी इत्यङ्गिरसभाषितं ॥

(7) साध्वीनानैव नारीणामग्निप्रपतनादृते ।  
नान्योहि धर्मो विश्वेद्यो मृते भर्तारि कश्चित् ॥

(8) पतिव्रता सम्यग्दीप्तं प्रविशेत् हुताशनं ।  
तत्र शिवाङ्गदधरं भर्तारं सान्त्वयत्यतः ॥

husband's death, she shall be subject to transmigration in a female form." (9)

Hear too what Vishnool the saint says :

"After the death of her husband a wife must live as an ascetic, or ascend his pile." (10)

Now hear the words of the Bruhmu Pooran on the subject of Postcremation :

"If her lord die in another country, let the faithful wife place his sandals on her breast, and pure enter the fire." (11)

The faithful widow is declared no suicide by this text of the Rig Ved : "When three days of impurity are gone she obtains obsequies." (12)

Gotum says :

"To a Brahmuncce after the death of her husband, Postcremation is not permitted. But to women of the other classes it is esteemed a chief duty." (13)

"Living let her benefit her husband ; dying she commits suicide." (14)

"The woman of the Brahmun tribe that follows her dead husband cannot, on account of her self-destruction, convey either herself or her husband to heaven." (15)

Concremation and Postcremation being thus established by the words of many sacred lawgivers, how can you say they are forbidden by the Shastrus, and desire to prevent their practice?

(9) यावद्धाधौ वृते पत्यौ स्त्री नात्मानं प्रदाहयेत् ।

तावन्न मुच्यते सा हि स्त्रीशरीरात् कथञ्चन ॥

(10) वृते भर्तृरि ब्रह्मचर्यं तदन्वारोहयन्वा ॥

(11) देशान्तरवृते पत्यौ साध्वी ततपादुकादयः ।

निधाद्योरसि संयुद्धा प्रविशेज्जातवेदसः ॥

(12) ऋग्वेदवादात् साध्वी स्त्री न भवेदात्मघातिनी ।

वाङ्माथौचे निवृत्ते तु श्राद्धं प्राप्नोति शास्त्रवत् ॥

(13) वृतानुसरणं नास्ति ब्राह्मण्या ब्रह्मण्यसनात् ।

इतरेषु तु वर्षेषु तपः परममुच्यते ॥

(14) जीवन्ती तद्धितं कुर्यान्मरणादात्मघातिनी ॥

(15) या स्त्री ब्राह्मणजातीया वृतं पतिमनुव्रजेत् ।

सा स्वर्गमात्मघातेन नात्मानं न पतिं नयेत् ॥



*Opponent.* All those passages you have quoted are indeed sacred law ; and it is clear from those authorities, that if women perform Concremation or Posteremation, they will enjoy heaven for a considerable time. But attend to what Munoo and others say respecting the duty of widows : “ Let her emaciate her body, by living voluntarily on pure flowers, roots, and fruits, but let her not, when her lord is deceased, even pronounce the name of another man. Let her continue till death forgiving all injuries, performing harsh duties, avoiding every sensual pleasure, and cheerfully practising the incomparable rules of virtue which have been followed by such women—as were devoted to one only husband.” (16)

Here Munoo directs, that after the death of her husband, the widow should pass her whole life as an ascetic. Therefore, the laws given by Ungira and others whom you have quoted, being contrary to the law of Munoo, cannot be accepted ; because the Ved declares, “ whatever Munoo has said is wholesome ;” (17) and Vrihasputi, “ whatever law is contrary to the law of Munoo is not commendable.” (18) The Ved especially declares, “ by living in the practice of regular and occasional duties the mind may be purified. Thereafter by hearing, reflecting, and constantly meditating on the Supreme Being, absorption in Bruhmu may be attained. Therefore from a desire during life of future fruition, life ought not to be destroyed.” (19) Munoo, Yagnyuvulkyu, and others, have then, in their respective codes of laws, prescribed to widows the duties of ascetics only. By this passage of the Ved, therefore, and the authority of Munoo and others, the words you have quoted from Ungira and the rest are set aside ; for by the express declaration of the former,

(16) कामन्तु अपयेद्देहं पुष्पमूलफलैः शुभैः । न तु नामापि गृहीयात् पत्न्यो  
मृते परस्व तु । आसीतामरण्यात् ज्ञान्ता नियता ब्रह्मचारिणी । यो धर्मं एकपत्नीनां  
काङ्क्षन्तो तमनुत्तमं ॥

(17) यत् किञ्चिन्नतुरवदत्तहै भेषजं ॥

(18) मन्वर्थविपरोक्ता या सा सृष्टिर्न प्रशस्यते ॥

(19) नञ्चादु ह न पुरायुषः स्वःकामौ प्रेयादिति ।

widows after the death of their husbands may, by living as ascetics, obtain absorption.

*Advocate.* What you have said respecting the laws of Ungira and others, that recommended the practice of Concremation and Posteremation we do not admit : because, though a practice has not been recommended by Munoo, yet, if directed by other lawgivers, it should not on that account be considered as contrary to the law of Munoo. For instance, Munoo directs the performance of Sundhya, but says nothing of calling aloud on the name of Huri ; yet Vyas prescribes calling on the name of Huri. The words of Vyas do not contradict those of Munoo. The same should be understood in the present instance. Munoo has commended widows to live as ascetics ; Vishnoo and other saints direct that they should either live as ascetics or follow their husbands. Therefore the law of Munoo may be considered to be applicable as an alternative.

*Opponent.* The analogy you have drawn betwixt the practice of Sundhya and invoking Huri, and that of Concremation and Posteremation does not hold. For, in the course of the day the performance of Sundhya, at the prescribed time, does not prevent one from invoking Huri at another period ; and, on the other hand, the invocation of Huri need not interfere with the performance of Sundhya. In this case, the direction of one practice is not inconsistent with that of the other. But in the case of living as an ascetic or undergoing Concremation, the performance of the one is incompatible with the observance of the other. *Scil.* Spending one's whole life as an ascetic after the death of a husband, is incompatible with immediate Concremation as directed by Ungira and others ; and, *vice versa*, Concremation, as directed by Ungira and others, is inconsistent with living as an ascetic, in order to attain absorption. Therefore those two authorities are obviously contradictory of each other. More especially as Ungira, by declaring that "there is no other way known for a virtuous woman except ascending the pile of her husband," has made Concremation an indispensable duty. And

Hareet also, in his code, by denouncing evil consequences, in his declaration, that "as long as a woman shall not burn herself after the death of her husband, she shall be subject to transmigration in a female form," has made this duty absolute. Therefore all those passages are in every respect contradictory to the law of Munoo and others.

*Advocate.* When Ungira says that there is no other way for a widow except Concremation, and when Hareet says that the omission of it is a fault, we reconcile their words with those of Munoo, by considering them as used merely for the purpose of exalting the merit of Concremation, but not as prescribing this as an indispensable duty. All these expressions, moreover, convey a promise of reward for Concremation, and thence it appears that Concremation is only optional.

*Opponent.* If, in order to reconcile them with the text of Munoo, you set down the words of Ungira and Hareet, that make the duty incumbent, as meant only to convey an exaggerated praise of Concremation, why do you not also reconcile the rest of the words of Ungira, Hareet, and others, with those in which Munoo prescribes to the widow the practice of living as an ascetic as her absolute duty? And why do you not keep aloof from witnessing the destruction of females, instead of tempting them with the inducement of future fruition? Moreover, in the text already quoted, self-destruction with the view of reward is expressly prohibited.

*Advocate.* What you have quoted from Munoo and Yagnyavalkyu and the text of the Ved is admitted. But how can you set aside the following text of the Rig Ved on the subject of Concremation? "O fire! let these women, with bodies anointed with clarified butter, eyes coloured with collyrium, and void of tears, enter thee, the parent of water, that they may not be separated from their husbands, but may be, in unison with excellent husbands, themselves sinless and jewels amongst women." (20)

(20) इमा नारोरविधवाः सुपन्नोवाङ्मनेन वपिषा सन्निशन्वनशवा अननीरा सुरवा  
पारोहन्तु यामयो योनिमघ्नः ॥

*Opponent.* This text of the Ved, and the former passages from Hareet and the rest whom you have quoted, all praise the practice of Concremation as leading to fruition, and are addressed to those who are occupied by sensual desires ; and you cannot but admit that to follow these practices is only optional. In repeating the Sunkulpyu of Concremation, the desire of future fruition is declared as the object. The text therefore of the Ved which we have quoted, offering no gratifications, supersedes, in every respect, that which you have adduced, as well as all the words of Ungira and the rest. In proof we quote the text of the Kuthopunishud : “ Faith in God which leads to absorption is one thing ; and rites which have future fruition for their object, another. Each of these, producing different consequences, holds out to man inducements to follow it. The man, who of these two chooses faith, is blessed : and he, who for the sake of reward practices rites, is dashed away from the enjoyment of eternal beatitude.” (21) Also the Moonduk Opunishud : “ Rites, of which there are eighteen members, are all perishable : he who considers them as the source of blessing shall undergo repeated transmigrations ; and all those fools who, immersed in the foolish practice of rites, consider themselves to be wise and learned, are repeatedly subjected to birth, disease, death, and other pains. When one blind man is guided by another, both subject themselves on their way to all kinds of distress.” (22)

It is asserted in the Bhugvut Geeta, the essence of all the Smritis, Poorans, and Itihases, that, “ all those ignorant persons who attach themselves to the words of the Veds that convey promises of fruition, consider those falsely alluring passages as leading to real happiness, and say, that besides them there is no other reality. Agitated in their minds by these desires, they

(21) अन्यच्छ्रियोऽन्यदुतैव प्रियस्ते भवेन्नानार्थे पुरुषं सिनोतः । तयोः श्रेयश्चाददानस्य साधु भवति ह्येतैर्यादयश्च प्रयो वृणोते ॥

(22) प्रवाञ्छन्ते बहदा यश्चरुपा अष्टादशोक्तमवरं येषु कर्म । एतच्छ्रियो येभिमन्दन्ति मूढा जराश्रुता ते पुनरैवापियन्ति ॥ अविद्यायामन्तरे वर्तमानाः स्वयं धीराः पश्चिन्मन्थमानाः । ऊहन्मानाः परिश्रान्त रुद्धा अन्तर्निव मोयमाना यथान्ताः ॥

believe the abodes of the celestial gods to be the chief object ; and they devote themselves to those texts which treat of ceremonies and their fruits, and entice by promises of enjoyment. Such people can have no real confidence in the Supreme Being.” (23) Thus also do the Moonduk Opunishud and the Geeta state that, “the science by which a knowledge of God is attained is superior to all other knowledge.” (24) Therefore it is clear, from those passages of the Ved and of the Geeta, that the words of the Ved which promise fruition, are set aside by the texts of a contrary import. Moreover, the ancient saints and holy teachers, and their commentators, and yourselves, as well as we and all others, agree that Munoo is better acquainted than any other lawgiver with the spirit of the Veds. And he, understanding the meaning of those different texts, admitting the inferiority of that which promised fruition, and following that which conveyed no promise of gratification, has directed widows to spend their lives as ascetics. He has also defined in his 12th chapter, what acts are observed merely for the sake of gratifications, and what are not. “Whatever act is performed for the sake of gratifications in this world or the next is called Pruburtuk, and those which are performed according to the knowledge respecting God, are called Niburtuk. All those who perform acts to procure gratifications, may enjoy heaven like the gods ; and he who performs acts free from desires, procures release from the five elements of this body, that is, obtains absorption.” (25)

*Advocate.* What you have said is indeed consistent with the Veds, with Munoo, and with the Bhuguvut Geeta. But from

(23) यामिनां पुष्पिता वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविप्रश्चितः । वेदवाद्भरताः पार्थे नान्यदक्षीति वादिनः ॥ कामात्मानः स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मफलप्रदा । क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥ भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयापहतचेतसां । व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥

(24) “यथा तदक्षरमधिगम्यते इत्यादि ।” “अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां ।”

(25) इह वासुन वा काश्यं प्रवृत्तं कर्म कीर्तयते । निष्कामं ज्ञानपूर्वकं निवृत्त-  
सुपदिश्यते ॥ प्रवृत्तं कर्म संसेव्य देवानामिति सार्व्विज्ञा । निवृत्तं सेवमानसु भूतान्य-  
थेति पञ्च वै ॥

this I fear, that the passages of the Veds and other Shastrus, that prescribe Concremation and Prosteremation as the means of attaining heavenly enjoyments, must be considered as only meant to deceive.

*Opponent.* There is no deception. The object of those passages is declared. As men have various dispositions, those whose minds are enveloped in desire, passion and cupidity, have no inclination for the disinterested worship of the Supreme Being. If they had no Shastrus of rewards, they would at once throw aside all Shastrus, and would follow their several inclinations, like elephants unguided by the hook. In order to restrain such persons from being led only by their inclinations, the Shastru prescribes various ceremonies, as Shyenjag for one desirous of the destruction of the enemy, Pootreshti for one desiring a son, and Jyotishtom for one desiring gratifications in heaven, &c.; but again reprobates such as are actuated by those desires, and at the same moment expresses contempt for such gratifications. Had the Shastru not repeatedly reprobated both those actuated by desire and the fruits desired by them, all those texts might be considered as deceitful. In proof of what I have advanced I cite the following text of the Opanishud, "Knowledge and rites together offer themselves to every man. The wise man considers which of these two is the better and which the worse. By reflection, he becomes convinced of the superiority of the former, despises rites, and takes refuge in knowledge. And the unlearned, for the sake of bodily gratification, has recourse to the performance of rites." (26) The Bhuguvut Geeta : "The Veds that treat of rites are for the sake of those who are possessed of desire ; therefore, O Urjoon ! do thou abstain from desires." (27)

Hear also the text of the Ved reprobatng the fruits of rites :  
 " As in this world the fruits obtained from cultivation and labour perish, so in the next world fruits derived from rites are perish-

(26) अथैष प्रेयस मनुष्यमेतस्मै समरीत्य विविमक्ति धीरः । अथोहि धीरोऽभि-  
 प्रेयसी हृषीते प्रथो मन्दो योगसेनाहृषीते ॥

(27) मनुष्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रीयन्तो ममार्जुन ॥

able.” (28) Also the Bhuguvut Geeta : “All those who observe the rites prescribed by the three Veds, and through those ceremonies worship me and seek for heaven, having become sinless from eating the remains of offerings, ascending to heaven, and enjoying the pleasures of the gods, after the completion of their rewards, again return to earth. Therefore, the observers of rites for the sake of rewards, repeatedly, ascend to heaven, and return to the world, and cannot obtain absorption.” (29)

*Advocate.* Though what you have advanced from the Ved and sacred codes against the practice of Concremation and Postcremation, is not to be set aside, yet we have had the practice prescribed by Hareet and others handed down to us.

*Opponent.* Such an argument is highly inconsistent with justice. It is every way improper to persuade to self-destruction by citing passages of inadmissible authority. In the second place, it is evident from your own authorities, and the Sunkulpu recited in conformity with them, that the widow should voluntarily quit life, ascending the flaming pile of her husband. But, on the contrary, you first bind down the widow along with the corpse of her husband, and then heap over her such a quantity of wood that she cannot rise. At the time too of setting fire to the pile, you press her down with large bamboos. In what passage of Hareet or the rest do you find authority for thus binding the woman according to your practice ? This then is, in fact, deliberate female murder.

*Advocate.* Though Hareet and the rest do not indeed authorize this practice of binding, &c., yet were a woman after having recited the Sunkulpu not to perform Concremation, it would be sinful, and considered disgraceful by others. It is on this account that we have adopted the custom.

*Opponent.* Respecting the sinfulness of such an act, that is mere talk : for in the same codes it is laid down, that the per-

(28) इह कर्मचितो लोकाः चीयते एवमेवामुत्र पुण्यचितो लोकाः चीयते ।

(29) वैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा यज्ञैरिष्टा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ति । ते पुण्यमासादा सुरेन्द्रलोकमश्नन्ति दिव्यान् दिवि देवभोगान् ॥ ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं चीये पुण्ये मत्तलोकं विव्रन्ति । एवं त्रयोधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥

formance of a penance will obliterate the sin of quitting the pile. (30) Or in case of inability to undergo the regular penance, absolution may be obtained by bestowing the value of a cow, or three kahuns of kowries. Therefore the sin is no cause of alarm. The disgrace in the opinion of others is also nothing : for good men regard not the blame or reproach of persons who can reprobate those who abstain from the sinful murder of women. And do you not consider how great is the sin to kill a woman ; therein forsaking the fear of God, the fear of conscience, and the fear of the Shastrus, merely from a dread of the reproach of those who delight in female murder ?

*Advocate.* Though tying down in this manner be not authorized by the Shastrus, yet we practise it as being a custom that has been observed throughout Hindoosthan.

*Opponent.* It never was the case that the practice of fastening down widows on the pile was prevalent throughout Hindoosthan : for it is but of late years that this mode has been followed, and that only in Bengal, which is but a small part of Hindoosthan. No one besides who has the fear of God and man before him, will assert that male or female murder, theft, &c., from having been long practised, cease to be vices. If, according to your argument, custom ought to set aside the precepts of the Shastrus, the inhabitants of the forests and mountains who have been in the habits of plunder, must be considered as guiltless of sin, and it would be improper to endeavour to restrain their habits. The Shastrus, and the reasonings connected with them, enable us to discriminate right and wrong. In those Shastrus such female murder is altogether forbidden. And reason also declares, that to bind down a woman for her destruction, holding out to her the inducement of heavenly rewards, is a most sinful act.

*Advocate.* This practice may be sinful or any thing else, but we will not refrain from observing it. Should it cease, people would generally apprehend that if women did not perform

(30) चित्तिवष्टा च या नारौ मोहाद्विचलिता भवेत् । प्राजापत्येन शुद्धेत्  
तस्माद्वि पापकर्मणः ॥



Concremation on the death of their husbands, they might go astray ; but if they burn themselves this fear is done away. Their family and relations are freed from apprehension. And if the husband could be assured during his life that his wife would follow him on the pile, his mind would be at ease from apprehensions of her misconduct.

*Opponent.* What can be done, if, merely to avoid the possible danger of digrace, you are unmercifully resolved to commit the sin of female murder. But is there not also a danger of a woman's going astray during the life-time of her husband, particularly when he resides for a long time in a distant country ? What remedy then have you got against this cause of alarm ?

*Advocate.* There is a great difference betwixt the case of the husband's being alive, and of his death ; for while a husband is alive, whether he resides near her or at a distance, a wife is under his control ; she must stand in awe of him. But after his death that authority ceases, and she of course is divested of fear.

*Opponent.* The Shastrus which command that a wife should live under the control of her husband during his life, direct that on his death she shall live under the authority of her husband's family, or else under that of her parental relations ; and the Shastrus have authorized the ruler of the country to maintain the observance of this law. Therefore, the possibility of a woman's going astray cannot be more guarded against during the husband's life than it is after his death. For you daily see, that even while the husband is alive, he gives up his authority, and the wife separates from him. Control alone cannot restrain from evil thoughts, words, and actions ; but the suggestions of wisdom and the fear of God may cause both man and woman to abstain from sin. Both the Shastrus and experience show this.

*Advocate.* You have repeatedly asserted, that from want of feeling we promote female destruction. This is incorrect, for it is declared in our Ved and codes of law, that mercy is the root of virtue, and from our practice of hospitality, &c. our compassionate dispositions are well known.

*Opponent.* That in other cases you shew charitable dispositions is acknowledged. But by witnessing from your youth the voluntary burning of women amongst your elder relatives, your neighbours and the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, and by observing the indifference manifested at the time when the women are writhing under the torture of the flames, habits of insensibility are produced. For the same reason, when men or women are suffering the pains of death, you feel for them no sense of compassion, like the worshippers of the female deities who, witnessing from their infancy the slaughter of kids and buffaloes, feel no compassion for them in the time of their suffering death, while followers of Vishnoo are touched with strong feelings of pity.

*Advocate.* What you have said I shall carefully consider.

*Opponent.* It is to me a source of great satisfaction, that you are now ready to take this matter into your consideration. By forsaking prejudice and reflecting on the Shastru, what is really conformable to its precepts may be perceived, and the evils and disgrace brought on this country by the crime of female murder will cease.

In this treatise the Sanskrit texts were not given by the author as they were in the following two treatises. We have thought fit to supply the Sanskrit texts in this also as we find them in the original Bengali.—ED.



A  
SECOND CONFERENCE  
BETWEEN  
AN ADVOCATE FOR, AND AN OPPONENT OF,  
THE PRACTICE OF  
BURNING WIDOWS ALIVE.

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CALCUTTA :

1220.



TO  
THE MOST NOBLE  
THE MARCHIONESS OF HASTINGS,  
COUNTESS OF LOUDOUN, &c. &c.

THE following tract, being a translation of a Bengalee Essay, published some time ago, as an appeal to reason in behalf of humanity, I take the liberty to dedicate to YOUR LADYSHIP ; for to whose protection can any attempt to promote a benevolent purpose be with so much propriety committed ?

I have the honour to remain, with the greatest respect,

YOUR LADYSHIP'S

Most obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR.

*February 26, 1820.*



## ON CONCREMATION ;

### A SECOND CONFERENCE BETWEEN AN ADVOCATE AND AN OPPONENT OF THAT PRACTICE.

*Advocate.* UNDER the title of Vidhayuk,\* or Preceptor, I have offered an answer to your former arguments. That, no doubt, you have attentively perused. I now expect your reply.

*Opponent.* I have well considered the answer that, after the lapse of nearly twelve months, you have offered. Such parts of your answer as consist merely of a repetition of passages already quoted by us, require no further observations now. But as to what you have advanced in opposition to our arguments and to the Shastrus, you will be pleased to attend to my reply.

In the first place, at the bottom of your 4th page you have given a particular interpretation to the following words of Vishnoo, the lawgiver :—

“Mrite bhurturi bruhmuchuryum tudunwarohunum va”† meaning “after the death of her husband a woman shall become an ascetic, or ascend the funeral pile,” and implying that either alternative is optional. To this, you say, eight objections are found in the Shastrus, therefore one of the alternatives must be preferred : that is to say, the woman who is unable to ascend the flaming pile shall live as an ascetic. This you maintain is the true interpretation ; and in proof you have cited the words of the Skundu Pooran and of Ungira. I answer. In every country all persons observe this rule, that meanings are to be inferred from the words used. In this instance the text of Vishnoo is comprised in five words : 1st, Mrite, “on death,” 2nd, bhurturi, “of a husband,” 3rd, bruhmuchuryum, “asceticism,” 4th,

\* This refers to a pamphlet published by the advocates of the *Suttee* under the title of “Dialogue between Bidhaok and Nissedhok.”—ED.



tudunwarohunum, "ascending his pile," 5th, va, "or." That is, "on the death of a husband, *his widow should* become an ascetic, or ascend his pile." It appears, therefore, from asceticism being mentioned first in order, that this is the most pious conduct for a widow to follow. But your interpretation, that this alternative is only left for widows who are unable to ascend the flaming pile, can by no means be deduced from the words of the text ; nor have any of the expounders of the Shastrus so expressed themselves.

For instance, the author of the Mitakshura, whose authority is always to be revered, and whose words you have yourself quoted as authority in p. 27, has thus decided on the subject of Concremation :—"The widow who is not desirous of final beatitude, but who wishes only for a limited term of a small degree of future fruition, is authorized to accompany her husband."\*

The Smartu Bhattacharjyu (Rughoo Nundun, the modern law commentator of Bengal) limited the words of Ungira, that "besides Concremation there is no other pious course for a widow," by the authority of the foregoing text of Vishnool ; and authorized the alternative of a widow living as an ascetic, or dying with her husband, explaining the words of Ungira as conveying merely the exaggerated praise of Concremation.

*Secondly.* From the time that Shastrus have been written in Sungskrit, no author or man of learning has ever asserted, as you have done, that the person who, desirous of the enjoyments of heaven, is unable to perform the rites leading to fruition, may devote himself to the attainment of final beatitude. On the contrary, the Shastrus uniformly declare that those who are unable to pursue final beatitude, may perform rites, but without desire ; and persons of the basest minds, who do not desire eternal beatitude, may even perform rites for the sake of their fruits.

‘ अतश्च नीचमजिच्छन्त्या अनित्यान्सुखरूपसर्गाधिना,  
अनुमनज् युक्तमितरकाम्यानुष्ठानवदिति सर्वमभवद्वा ।

As Vusishthu declares :—

“The person who does not exert himself to acquire that knowledge of God which leads to final absorption, may perform ceremonies without expectation of reward.”\*

“To encourage and improve those ignorant persons, who, looking only to pleasure, cannot distinguish betwixt what is God and not God, the Srooti has promised rewards.”†

*Bhuguvud Geeta.*

“If you are unable to acquire by degrees divine knowledge, be diligent in performing works with a view to please me, that by such works you may acquire a better state. If you are unable even to perform rites solely for my sake, then, controlling your senses, endeavour to perform rites without the desire of fruition.”‡

Therefore, to give the preference to self-immolation, or to the destruction of others, for the sake of future reward, over asceticism, which gives a prospect of eternal beatitude, is to treat with contempt the authorities of the Veds, the Vedant, and other Durshuns, as well as of the Bhuguvud Geeta and many others. As the Ved says :—

“Knowledge and rites both offer themselves to man ; but he who is possessed of wisdom, taking their respective natures into serious consideration, distinguishes one from the other, and chooses faith, despising fruition ; while a fool, for the sake of advantage and enjoyment, accepts the offer of rites.”§

\* यश्चे न रोचते ज्ञानं अध्यात्मं मोक्षसाधनं ।

ईशार्पितेन चित्तेन यजिद्रिक्तामकर्षणा ॥

† मूढानां भोगदृष्टीनां आत्मानात्माविवेकिना ।

रूपये चाधिकाराय विदधाति फलं श्रुतिः ॥

‡ अध्यासे ऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मेपरमो भव ।

मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन् सिद्धिं मवाप्स्यसि ॥

अथैतदप्यशक्नोसि कर्त्तुं मदयोगमाश्रितः ।

सर्व्वकर्म्मफलत्यागं ततः कुर्व्व यत्तात्त्ववान् ॥

§ अथैव प्रथमं मनुष्यमेतत्तौ सम्यगोक्तं विविनक्ति चौरः ।

अथोद्धि चौरोऽभिप्रेयसी उच्यते प्रथो मन्दो यानवेमाह्वयते ॥

Without entirely rejecting the authority of the Geeta, the essence of all Shastrus, no one can praise rites performed for the sake of fruition, nor recommend them to others ; for nearly half of the Bhuguvud Geeta is filled with the dispraise of such works, and with the praise of works performed without desire of fruition. A few of those passages have been quoted in the former conference, and a few others are here given.

“Works performed, except for the sake of God, only entangle the soul. Therefore, O Urjoon, forsaking desire, perform works with the view to please God.”\*

“The person who performs works without desire of fruition, directing his mind to God, obtains eternal rest. And the person who is devoted to fruition, and performs works with desire, he is indeed inextricably involved.”†

“Oh, Urjoon, rites performed for the sake of fruition are degraded far below works done without desire, which lead to the acquisition of the knowledge of God. Therefore perform thou works without desire of fruition, with the view of acquiring divine knowledge. Those who perform works for the sake of fruition are most debased.”‡

“It is my firm opinion, that works are to be performed, forsaking their consequences, and the prospect of their fruits.”§

The Geeta is not a rare work, and you are not unacquainted with it. Why then do you constantly mislead women, unacquainted with the Shastrus, to follow a debased path, by holding out to them as temptations the pleasures of futurity, in defiance of all the Shastrus, and merely to please the ignorant ?

° यश्चार्थात् कर्मणोऽन्यत् स्त्रीकोऽयं कर्मवन्धनः ।

तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥

† युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा भ्रान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकी ।

अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥

‡ दूरेणैश्वरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनञ्जय ।

बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कपयाः फलहेतवः ॥

§ एतदन्यदितु कर्मोऽपि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।

कर्तव्यासीति ते पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमं ॥

You have said, that eight objections are to be found in the Shastrus to the optional alternative deduced from the works of Vishnoo. To this I reply.

*First.* To remove an imaginary difficulty, a violation of the obvious interpretation of words, whose meaning is direct and consistent, is altogether inadmissible.

*Secondly.* Former commentators, finding no such objection to the interpretation given to the words of Vishnoo, as allowing the optional alternative of asceticism or Concremation, have given the preference to asceticism. The author of the Mitakshura, quoting this text of Vishnoo in treating of Concremation, makes no allusion to such an objection, but finally declares in favour of asceticism.

*Thirdly.* Even allowing an optional alternative to be liable to the eight objections, former authors have on many occasions admitted such an alternative. For example :—

Srooti. “Oblations are to be made of wheat or of barley.”\* But the meaning of this is not, according to your mode of interpretation, “That if it cannot be made of barley, an offering is to be made of wheat.”

“Burnt offering is to be made at sunrise or before sunrise.”† In this instance your mode of explanation may be applied ; but no authors have ever given such an interpretation, but all have admitted the alternative to be optional.

उपासीत जगन्नाथं शिवम् अगतां पतं ।

Here also, according to your opinion, the meaning would be, that if you cannot worship Shivu you should worship Vishnoo. But no authors have ever given such an interpretation to those words, and to give more or less worship to Shivu than to Vishnoo is quite contrary to the decision of all the Shastrus.

*Fourthly.* The following text has also been quoted by you in opposition to the optional alternative in question, taken as you assert from the Skundu Pooran :—

\* ब्रौह्मिर्यजेत यवैर्यजेत ।

† उदिते जुहोति अग्निते जुहोति ॥

“On the death of her husband, if by chance a woman is unable to perform Concremation, nevertheless she should preserve the virtue required of widows. If she cannot preserve that virtue, she must descend to hell.”\* To confirm this text you have quoted the words of Ungira :—“There is no other pious course for a widow besides Concremation ;”† which you have interpreted, that “for a widow there is no other course so pious.”

I answer, the words of Ungira are express, that there is no other pious course for a widow than Concremation. And the Smartu commentator, having thus interpreted the text, in reconciling it with the words of Vishnool already quoted, declares, that it conveys merely exaggerated praise of Concremation.

But you, in opposition to the true meaning of the expression and to the interpretation given by the Smartu commentator, have explained those words to suit your own argument, that there is no other course more pious than that of Concremation. Perverting thus the meaning of the Shastrus, what benefit do you propose by promoting the destruction of feeble woman, by holding up the temptation of enjoyments in a future state? This I am at a loss to understand.

If the passage you have quoted from the Skundu Pooran really exist, the mode in which the Smartu commentator has explained the words of Ungira (“there is no other virtuous course,”) must be applied to those of the Skundu Pooran, viz. that the text of the Skundu Pooran which contradicts Munool, Vishnool, and others, is to be understood as merely conveying exaggerated praise ; because, to exalt Concremation, which leads to future enjoyments that are treated as despicable by the Opanishads of the Veds and Smriti, and by the Bhuguvud Geeta, above asceticism, in which the mind may be purified by the performance of works, without desire that may lead to eternal

\* अनुयाति न भर्तारं यदि देवात् कथञ्चन ।  
तथापि शोकां संरक्ष्य शोकभङ्गात् पतत्यधः ।

† नास्ती हि धर्मो विज्ञेयो जने भर्तारि कश्चित् ।

beatitude, is every way inadmissible, and in direct opposition to the opinions maintained by ancient authors and commentators.

## SECTION II.

IN the latter end of the 7th page you have admitted, that the sayings of Ungira, Vishnoo, and Hareet, on the subject of Concremation, are certainly at variance with those of Munoo ; but assert, that any law given by Munoo, when contradicted by several other lawgivers, is to be considered annulled :—therefore, his authority in treating of the duties of widows is not admissible, on account of the discord existing between it and passages of Hareet, and Vishnoo, and others. With a view to establish this position you have advanced three arguments. The first of them is, that Vrihusputi says, “ whatever law is contrary to the law of Munoo, is not commendable,”\* in which the nominative case, “ whatever law,” as being used in the singular number, signifies, that in case laws, given by a single person, stand in opposition to those of Munoo they are not worthy of reverence, but if several persons differ from Munoo in any certain point, his authority must be set aside. I reply. It has been the invariable practice of ancient and modern authors, to explain all texts of law so as to make them coincide with the law of Munoo. They in no instance declare that the authority of Munoo is to be set aside, in order to admit that of any other lawgiver. But you have, on the contrary, set aside the authority of Munoo, on the ground of inconsistency with the words of two or three other authors. In this you not only act contrary to the practice of all commentators, but moreover in direct opposition to the authority of the Ved, for the Ved declares, “ whatever Munoo lays down, that is commendable,”† which text you have yourself quoted in p. 7. And as to what you have said respecting the words of Vrihusputi

\* अन्वयेविपरोता या सा स्मृतिर्न प्रशस्यते ।

(†) यत् किञ्चिन्मनुरवदत्त ई भेषजं । स्मृतिः ।

as being in the singular number, and therefore only applicable to a case in which Munoo is opposed by only one lawgiver, it is obvious that the word "whatever," being a general term, includes every particular case falling under it ; and therefore his law must be followed, whatever number of authors there may be who lay down a different direction. And the reason of this is expressed in the former part of the verse of Vrihusputi, that "Munoo has in his work collected the meaning of the Veds." From this it follows, that whatever law is inconsistent with the code of Munoo, which is the substance of the Ved, is really inconsistent with the Ved itself, and therefore inadmissible. Admitting the justice of your explanation of Vrihusputi's text, that the authority of any individual lawgiver, who is inconsistent with Munoo, must be set aside, but that when several authorities coincide in laying down any rule inconsistent with his law, they are to be followed, one might on the same principle give a new explanation to the following text :—

"The person who attempts to strike a Brahmun goes to the hell called Sutnuyat, or of a hundred punishments ; and he who actually strikes a Brahmun, goes to the hell of Suhusruyat, or a thousand punishments."\*

Here, also, the noun in the nominative case, and that in the accusative case also, are both in the singular number ; therefore, according to your exposition, where two or three persons concur in beating a Brahmun, or where a man beats two or three Brahmuns, there is no crime committed. There are many similar instances of laws, the force of which would be entirely frustrated by your mode of interpretation.

You have argued in the second place that the practice of Concremation is authorized by a text of the Rig Ved, and consequently the authority of Munoo is superseded by a higher authority. I reply. In the 12th line of the 9th page of your tract, you have quoted and interpreted a text of the Veds, expressing that "the

mind may be purified so as to seek a knowledge of God from which absorption may accrue, by the performance of the daily and occasional ceremonies, without the desire of fruition ; therefore, while life may be preserved, it ought not to be destroyed.” With this then and all similar texts, there is the most evident concord with the words of Munoo. Notwithstanding your admission to this effect, you assert that the authority of the Veds contradicts the declaration of Munoo. From the text already quoted, “that whatever Munoo has declared is to be accepted,” it follows that there can be no discrepancy between Munoo and the Ved. But there is certainly an apparent inconsistency between the text quoted from the ceremonial part of the Rig Ved authorizing Concremation, and that above quoted from the spiritual parts of the Ved, to which the celebrated Munoo has given the preference, well aware that such parts of the Ved are of more authority than the passages relating to debased ceremonies. He has accordingly directed widows to live, practising austerities. The text of the Rig Ved, of course, remains of force to those ignorant wretches who are fettered with the desire of fruition, which debars them from the hope of final beatitude. This too has been acknowledged by yourself, in p. 11, l. 17, and was also fully considered in the first Conference, p. 13, line 18. You cannot but be aware too, that when there is doubt respecting the meaning of any text of the Ved, that interpretation which has been adopted by Munoo, is followed by both ancient and modern authors. In the Bhuvishyu Pooran, Muhadev gave instructions for the performance of a penance for wilfully slaying a Brahmun ; but observing that this was at variance with the words of Munoo, which declare that there is no expiation for wilfully killing a Brahmun, he does not set aside the text of Munoo founded on the Veds by his own authority, but explains the sense in which it is to be accepted :—“The object of the declaration of Munoo, that there is no expiation for the wilful murder of a Brahmun, was the more absolute prohibition of the crime ; or it may be considered as applicable to Kshutrees, and



the other tribes.”\* The great Muhadev, then, did not venture to set aside the words of Munoo, but you have proposed to set up the texts of Hareet and Ungira as of superior authority.

Thirdly. You have quoted, with the view of doing away with the authority of Munoo, the text of Jymini, signifying that if there be a difference of opinion respecting a subject, then the decision of the greater number must be adopted ; and therefore, as the authority of Munoo, in the present instance, is at variance with several writers, it must yield to theirs. I reply. It is apparent that this text, as well as common sense, only dictates, that where those who differ in opinion are equal in point of authority, the majority ought to be followed ; but if otherwise, this text is not applicable to the case. Thus the authority of the Ved, though single, cannot be set aside by the concurrent authorities of a hundred lawgivers ; and in like manner the authority of Munoo, which is derived immediately from the Ved, cannot be set aside by the contradicting authorities of the others either singly or collectively. Moreover, if Ungira, Hareet, Vishnoo, and Vyas, authorized widows to chose the alternative of Concremation, or of living as ascetics, on the other hand, besides Munoo, Yagnyuvalkyu, Vusishthu, and several other lawgivers have prescribed asceticism only. Why, therefore, despising the authorities of Munoo and others, do you persist in encouraging weak women to submit to murder, by holding out to them the temptations of future pleasures in heaven ?

### SECTION III.

THE quotations from the Moonduk Opanishud and the Bhuguvud Geeta, which we quoted in our first Conference,† to shew

- \* कान्तो ब्राह्मणवधे यदेतन्मनुजोदितं ।
- एकान्तो विप्रवधवर्जं नार्थमुदीरितं ।
- यदा अत्रादिविषयमेतद् वचनं विदुः ।

† See texts 22 and 23 in pages 303 and 304.— Ed.

the light in which rites should be held, you have repeated ; and have also quoted some texts of the Veds directing the performance of certain rites, such as, "He who desires heavenly fruition shall perform the sacrifice of a horse."\*

In page 17 you have given your final conclusion on the subject to this effect : "That rites are not prohibited, but that pious works performed without desire are preferable to works performed for the sake of fruition ; and he also who performs those works without desire, is superior to him who performs works for the sake of fruition." If then works without desire are acknowledged by you to be superior to works with desire of fruition, why do you persuade widows to perform works for the sake of fruition, and do not recommend to them rather to follow ascetism, by which they may acquire eternal beatitude ? And with respect to your assertion, that "rites are not prohibited," this is inconsistent with the Shastrus ; for if all the texts of the Veds and lawgivers, prohibiting rites, were to be quoted, they would fill a large volume ; (of these a few have been already quoted by me in pp. 5 and 6.) There are indeed Shastrus directing the performance of rites for the sake of fruition, but these are acknowledged to be of less authority than those which prohibit such rites ; as is proved by the following text from the Moonduk Opunishud : "Shastrus are of two sorts, superior and inferior ; of these the superior are those by which the Eternal God is approached."†

\* In the Bhuguvud Geeta Krishnu says : "Amongst Shastrus, I am those which treat of God."‡

In the Sree Bhaguvut is the following text : "Ill-minded persons, not perceiving that the object of the Ved is to direct us to absorption, call the superficially tempting promises of rewards

\* स्वर्गकामोऽन्नमेधेन यजेत ।

† इ विद्म वेदितव्यं परा चेवापरा च

अथ परा यथा तद्वचरमाधिगम्यते ।

‡ अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां ।

their principal fruit ; but such as know the Veds thoroughly do not hold this opinionon.”\*

The passages directing works for the sake of fruition are therefore adapted only for the most ignorant. Learned men should endeavour to withdraw all those ignorant persons from works performed with desire, but should never, for the sake of profit, attempt to drown them in the abyss of passion. Rughoo Nundun quotes and adopts the following words : “ Learned men should not persuade the ignorant to perform rites for the sake of fruition, for it is written in the Pooran, that he who knows the path to eternal happiness will not direct the ignorant to perform works with desire, as the good physician refuses to yield to the appetite of his patient for injurious food.”†

#### SECTION IV.

IN p. 17, l. 13, of your treatise, you have said, that the Shas-tru does not admit that widows, in giving up the use of oil, and betel and sexual pleasures, &c. as ascetics, perform works without desire, and acquire absorption. And for this you advance two proofs : the first, that it appears that Munoo directs that a widow should continue till death as an ascetic, *aiming* to practise the incomparable rules of virtue that have been followed by such women as were devoted to only one husband. From the word *aiming*, it follows, that the duties of an ascetic, to be practised by widows, are of the nature of those performed with desire. Secondly. From the subsequent words of Munoo it appears, that those widows who live austere lives ascend to heaven like ascetics from their youth ; therefore, from the words ascending to heaven, it is obvious that the austerities that may be performed by

\* एवं व्यवसितं कश्चिद्विज्ञाय कुतुहलः ।

फलश्रुतिं कुसुमितां न वेदशा वदन्ति हि ॥

† पण्डितेनापि सुखं काम्ये कर्मणि न प्रवर्णयितव्यः, भागवते,

स्वयं निःश्रेयसं विद्वान् न वक्ष्यन्ताय कर्म हि ।

न दानि रोगिणे पथ्यं वाञ्छतेऽपि भिषक्तमः ॥

them are for reward. I reply. I am surprised at your assertion, that austerities practised by widows cannot be considered as performed without desire, and leading to absorption ; for whether austerities or any other kind of act be performed with desire or without desire, must depend on the mind of the agent. Some may follow asceticism or other practices for the sake of heavenly enjoyments, while others, forsaking desire of fruition, may perform them, and at length acquire final beatitude. Therefore, if a widow practise austerities without the desire of fruition, and yet her acts are asserted to be with desire of fruition, this amounts to a setting at defiance both experience and the Shastrus, in a manner unworthy of a man of learning like yourself. As to what you have observed respecting the word *aiming* in the text of Munoo, it never can be inferred from the use of that word, that the asceticism of widows must necessarily be with desire ; for with the object of final beatitude, we practise the acquisition of the knowledge of God, which no Shastru nor any of the learned has ever classed amongst works performed with desire of fruition. For no man possessed of understanding performs any movement of mind or body without an object. It is those works only, therefore, that are performed for the sake of corporeal enjoyments, either in the present or in a future state of existence, that are said to be with desire, and that are, as such, prohibited, as Munoo defines : “ Whatever act is performed for the sake of gratifications in this world or the next is called *Praburttuk* : and those which are performed according to the knowledge of God, are called *Niburttuk*.”\*

As to your second argument, that widows leading an ascetic life are rewarded by a mansion in heaven, I reply ; that from these words it does not appear that austerities should necessarily be reckoned amongst works performed for reward ; for a mansion in heaven is not granted to those alone who perform works with desire, but also to those who endeavour to acquire a know-

\* इह वासुच वा काम्यं प्रवृत्तं कर्म कौर्त्तते ।

निष्कामं ज्ञानपूर्वकं निवृत्तमुपदिश्यते ।

ledge of God, but come short of attaining it in this life. They must after death remain for a long time in the heaven called the Brumhulok, and again assume a human form, until they have, by perfecting themselves in divine knowledge, at length obtained absorption. The Bhuguvud Geeta says distinctly :

“A man whose devotions have been broken off by death, having enjoyed for an immensity of years the rewards of his virtues in the regions above, at length is born again in some holy and respectable family.”\*

Koollook Bhuttu, the commentator on Munoo, says expressly in his observations on the text of his author, that those ascetic widows ascend to heaven like Sunuk, Balukhilyu and other devotees from their youth. By this, it is clearly shewn, that those widows ascend to heaven in the same way as those pious devotees who have already acquired final beatitude, which can only be attained by works performed without desire. And hence the austerities of widows must be reckoned amongst works without desire.

#### SECTION V.

IN page 18, you have asserted that a widow who undergoes Concremation has a higher reward than she who lives as a devotee ; for the husband of the woman who performs Concremation, though guilty of the murder of a Brahmun, or of ingratitude or treachery towards a friend, has his sins, by her act, expiated, and is saved from hell, and her husband's, her father's, and her mother's progenitors, are all beatified, and she herself is delivered from female form. I reply. You have stated, in page 27, commencing at the 3rd line, that works without desire are preferable to those performed for the sake of fruition ; while here again you say, that Concremation is preferable to asceticism. You have, however, assigned as a reason for your

\* प्राप्य पुण्यकृतां लोकानुविता शश्वतोः समाः ।  
यस्मिन् यस्मिन् गेहे योगबद्धोऽभिरुच्यते ।

new doctrine, that Concremation saves progenitors as well as the husband. I have already shown, that such promises of reward are merely held out to the most ignorant, in order to induce them to follow some kind of religious observance, and to withdraw from evil conduct. Therefore, to prefer works performed with a desire of fruition, to works without desire, merely on the ground of such exaggerated promises, is contrary to all the Shastrus. If, in defiance of all the Shastrus, you maintain that such promises of reward are to be understood literally, and not merely as incitements, still there can be no occasion for so harsh a sacrifice, so painful to mind and body, as burning a person to death in order to save their lines of progenitors ; for, by making an offering of one ripe plantain to Shivu, or a single flower of Kurubeer, either to Shivu or to Vishnoo, thirty millions of lines of progenitors may be saved.

“He, who maketh an oblation of a single ripe plantain to Shivu, shall with thirty millions of races of progenitors ascend to the heaven of Shivu.”\*

“By presenting a single Kurubeer, white or not white, to Vishnoo or Shivu, thirty millions of races of progenitors are exalted to heaven.”†

Nor is there any want of promise of reward to those who perform works without desire. In fact, rather more abundant rewards are held out for such works than those you can quote for the opposite practice. “Those who have acquired knowledge in the prescribed mode can, by mere volition, save any number of progenitors ; and all the gods offer worship to the devotees of the Supreme Being.”‡

\* एकं मोक्षफलं पक्वं यः शिवाय निवेदयेत् ।  
त्रिकोटिकुलसंयुक्तः शिवलोके महीयते ॥

† एकेन करवीरेण सितेनाप्यसितेन वा ।  
हरिं वा हरमभ्यर्च्य त्रिकोटिकुलमुद्धरेत् ॥

‡ सङ्ख्यादेवास्त्य पितरः समुत्तिष्ठन्ति,  
सर्वे देवा यथा बलिमाहरन्ति ।

A volume filled with texts of this kind might be easily written. Moreover, should even the least part of any ceremony performed for reward be omitted or mistaken, the fruits are destroyed, and evil is produced. But there is no bad consequence from a failure in works performed without desire, for the completion of these, even in part, is advantageous. In proof I quote the Bhuguvud Geeta : " Works without desire, if only commenced, are never without advantage ; and if any member be defective, evil consequences do not ensue, as in works performed with desire. And the performance of even a small portion of a work without desire brings safety."\*

There is evidently a possibility of a failure in some portion of the rites of Concremation or Postcremation, particularly in the mode in which you perform the ceremony contrary to the directions of the Shastrus. What connection is there betwixt that mode and the enjoyment of temporary heavenly gratifications—a mode which only subjects the widow to the consequences of a violent death ?

## SECTION VI.

Again in p. 17, l. 3, you admit it to be more commendable for a widow to attend to the acquisition of knowledge than to die by Concremation ; but afterwards, in order to persuade them to the practice of Concremation, and to prevent them from pursuing the acquisition of knowledge, you observe, that women are naturally prone to pleasure, are extremely devoted to works productive of fruits, and are always subject to their passions. To persuade such persons to forsake Concremation, in order to attempt the acquisition of knowledge is to destroy their hopes in both ways. In support of your opinion you have quoted the

\* नेहातिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विदाते ।

अथनव्यस्य धर्मस्य चाद्यदे मद्भनो भयान् ॥

Geeta : "Those ignorant persons who are devoted to works ought not to be dissuaded from performing them."\*

I reply. Your object in persuading women to burn themselves may now be distinctly perceived ; you consider women, even of respectable classes, as prone to pleasure, and always subject to their passions ; and therefore you are apprehensive lest they should lose both prospects of hope, by giving up Concremation, and attempting to acquire knowledge. For this reason you lead them to the destruction of their lives, by holding out to them the temptation of future rewards. It is very certain that all mankind, whether male or female, are endowed with a mixture of passions ; but by study of the Shastrus, and frequenting the society of respectable persons, those passions may be gradually subdued, and the capability of enjoying an exalted state may be attained. We ought, therefore, to endeavour to withdraw both men and women from debased sensual pleasures, and not to persuade them to die with the hope of thereby obtaining sensual enjoyments, by which after a certain period of gratification, they are again immersed in the pollutions of the womb, and subjected to affliction. The Shastrus have directed those men or women, who seek after a knowledge of God, to hear and reflect upon his doctrine, that they may escape from the grievous pain of this world ; and they have also prescribed daily and occasional rites to be performed without the hope of reward by those who do not seek after divine knowledge in order that their minds may be purified, and prepared to receive that knowledge. We, therefore, in conformity with the Shastru, make it our endeavour to dissuade widows from desiring future base and fleeting enjoyments, and encourage them to the acquisition of that divine knowledge which leads to final beatitude. Widows, therefore, by leading an ascetic life in the performance of duties without desire, may purify their minds and acquire divine knowledge, which may procure for them final beatitude. And consequently there is no reason why they

\* न बुद्धिमेव जनयेदज्ञानं कर्म्मसङ्गिना ।



should lose both objects of future hope by forsaking Concre-  
mation.

“Oh, Urjoon, by placing their reliance on me, women and those of the lower classes of Vyshyu and Soodru may obtain the highest exaltation.”\*

You, however, considering women devoted to their passions and consequently incapable of acquiring divine knowledge, direct them to perform Concremation ; and maintain that, if any amongst them should not burn with their husbands, according to your final decision from the Shastrus, they must lose the hopes that belong to both practices ; because according to your opinion, they are entirely incapable of acquiring divine knowledge, and by not adopting Concremation, they give up the prospect of future gratifications. As to your quotation from the Geeta, to show that persons devoted to works ought not to be dissuaded from the performance of them, it may be observed that this text applies only to rites offered without desire of rewards, though applied by you to works performed for the sake of future enjoyment, in direct inconsistency with the authority of the Geeta. The object of this, as well as of all texts of the Geeta, is to dissuade men from works performed with desire. The Geeta and its Commentaries are both accessible to all. Let the learned decide the point.

You have quoted the following text of Vusishthu : “He who being devoted to worldly pleasures, boasts, saying, ‘I am a knower of God,’ can neither obtain the consequences procurable from works, nor attain final beatitude, the fruit of divine knowledge.”†

I admit the force of this text. For whether a man be devoted to worldly pleasures or not, if he be a boaster, either of

\* नां हि पाथे व्यपान्त्रित्य येऽपि सुतः पापधीनयः ।

स्त्रियो वैश्या क्षत्र्या शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ।

† सांसारिकसुखासक्तं ब्रह्मज्ञोऽज्ञोतिवादिनं ।

कर्णब्रह्मोभयवदं इत्यादि ।

divine knowledge or of any other acquirement, he is indeed most despicable ; but I am unable to see how this text, which forbids vain glory, is applicable to the question before us, which relates to the Concremation of widows.

## SECTION VII.

In your 20th page, you have stated for us, that we do not object to the practice of Concremation, but to the tying down of the widow to the pile before setting it on fire. I reply. This is very incorrect, for it is a gross misrepresentation of our argument ; because Concremation or Posteremation is a work performed for the sake of future reward, which the Oopunishud and the Geeta, and other Shastrus, have declared to be most contemptible. Consequently, relying on those Shastrus, it has been always our object to dissuade widows from the act of Concremation or Posteremation, that they might not, for the sake of the debased enjoyment of corporeal pleasures, renounce the attainment of divine knowledge. As to the mode in which you murder widows by tying them to the pile, we do exert ourselves to prevent such deeds, for those who are witnesses to an act of murder, and neglect to do any thing towards its prevention, are accomplices in the crime.

In justification of the crime of burning widows by force, you have stated, towards the foot of the same page, that in those countries where it is the custom for widows to ascend the flaming pile, there cannot be any dispute as to the propriety of following that mode ; but where that is not the mode followed, and it is the practice for those that burn the corpse to place a portion of fire contiguous to the pile, so that it may gradually make its way to the pile, and at that time the widow, according to the prescribed form, ascends the pile, in this mode also there is nothing contrary to the Shastrus. You have at the same time quoted two or three authorities to shew, that rites should be performed according to the custom of the country. I reply. Female

murder, murder of a Brahmun, parricide, and similar heinous crimes, cannot be reckoned amongst pious acts by alleging the custom of a country in their behalf ; by such customs rather the country in which they exist is itself condemned. I shall write more at large to this purpose in the conclusion. The practice, therefore, of forcibly tying down women to the pile, and burning them to death, is inconsistent with the Shastrus, and highly sinful. It is of no consequence to affirm, that this is customary in any particular country—if it were universally practised, the murders would still be criminal. The pretence that many are united in the commission of such murder will not secure them from divine vengeance. The customs of a country or of a race may be followed in matters where no particular rules are prescribed in the Shastrus ; but the wilful murder of widows, prohibited by all Shastrus, is not to be justified by the practice of a few. From the Skundu Pooran : “In those matters in which neither the Veds nor lawgivers give either direct sanction or prohibition, the customs of a country or of a race may be observed.”\*

If you insist that the practice of a country or of a race, though directly contrary to the directions of the Shastrus, is still proper to be observed, and to be reckoned amongst lawful acts, I reply, that in Shivukanchee and Vishnookanchee it is the custom for the people of all classes of one of those places, whether learned or ignorant, mutually to revile the god peculiarly worshipped by the people of the other—those of Vishnookanchee despising Shivu, and of Shivukanchee in the same manner holding Vishnoo in contempt. Are the inhabitants of those places, whose custom it is thus to revile Shivu and Vishnoo not guilty of sin ? For each of those tribes may assert, in their own defence, that it is the practice of their country and race to revile the god of the other. But no learned Hindoo will pretend to say, that this excuse saves them from sin. The

\* न यत्र साक्षाद्विधयो न निषेधाः श्रुतौ स्मृतौ ।  
दीक्षाचारकुलाचारौ सप्त धर्मो निरूपयते ॥

Rajpoots, also, in the neighbourhood of the Dooab, are accustomed to destroy their infant daughters ; they also must not be considered guilty of the crime of childmurder, as they act according to the custom of their country and race. There are many instances of the same kind. No Pundits, then, would consider a heinous crime, directly contrary to the Shastrus, as righteous, by whatever length of practice it may appear to be sanctioned.

You have at first alleged, that to burn a widow after tying her down on the pile, is one of the acts of piety, and have then quoted our argument for the opposite opinion, that “the inhabitants of forests and mountains are accustomed to robbery and murder : but must these be considered as faultless, because they follow only the custom of their country ?” To this you have again replied, that respectable people are not to be guided by the example of mountaineers and foresters. But the custom of burning widows, you say, “has been sanctioned by the most exemplary Pundits for a length of time. It is the custom then, of respectable people that is to be followed, and not that of men of no principles.” I answer. Respectability, and want of respectability, depend upon the acts of men. If the people of this province, who have been constantly guilty of the wilful murder of women by tying them to the pile in which they are burnt, are to be reckoned amongst the respectable, then why should not the inhabitants of mountains and forests be also reckoned good, who perpetrate murder for the sake of their livelihood, or to propitiate their cruel deities ? To shew that the custom of a country should be followed, you have quoted a text of the Ved, signifying that the example of Brahmuns well versed in the Shastrus, of good understanding, and whose practice is in conformity with reason and the Shastrus, not subject to passion, and accustomed to perform good works, should be followed. And you have also quoted the words of Vyas, signifying that the authorities of the Veds and Shastrus, as well as of reason, being various, the practice pointed out by illustrious

men should be adopted. I reply. You have shewn that the example of men versed in the Shastrus, and who act in conformity with reason and the Shastrus, should be followed ; but can you call those who, in defiance of the Shastrus, wilfully put women to death by tying them down to the pile on which they are burnt, illustrious, acquainted with the Veds, and devoted to acts prescribed by the Shastrus and by reason ? If not, their example is to be disregarded. If you can call those, who wilfully tie down women to put them to death, righteous and illustrious, then there is no instance of unrighteousness and depravity. I have already said, that when any act is neither directly authorized nor prohibited by the Shastrus, the custom of the country or of the race, should be the rule of conduct ; but in the present case, the words are express in prescribing that the widow shall *enter* the flaming pile. But those who, in direct defiance of the authority of the Shastrus, act the part of woman-murderers, in tying down the widow to the pile, and, subsequently applying the flame, burn her to death, can never exculpate themselves from the sin of woman-murder. As to the words you have quoted from the Skundu Pooran, signifying that the arguments of one who has no faith in Shivu and Vishnoo can have no weight in the discussion of the legality of facts, I reply, this text is applicable to those who worship images. Those who worship forms under any name, and have no faith in Shivu and Vishnoo, their worship is vain, and their words to be disregarded. In the same way the words of the Koolarnuv : “He whose mouth does not give out the smell of wine and flesh, should perform a penance and be avoided, and is as an inferior animal. This is undoubted.” \* These words are applicable only to those who follow the Tuntrus ; and if all such texts are considered otherwise applicable than in relation to the sects to whom they are directed, there is no possibility of reconciling the variances betwixt the different Shastrus. The Shastru, treating

\* आनिवासदीर्घादीनां यथा मुच्यते भवेत् ।

प्रायश्चित्तो स वज्रादि पदपरे न संशयः ॥

of God, contains the following words: "Acts and rites that originate in movements of the hands, and other members of the body, being perishable, cannot effect beatitude that is eternal." \* \*

"Those that worship forms under appellations, continue subject to form and appellation; for no perishable means can effect the acquisition of an imperishable end." †

"That man who considers the Being that is infinite, incomprehensible, pure, extending as far as space and time and vacuity, to be finite, perceptible by the senses, limited by time and place, subject to passion and anger, what crime is such a robber of Divine majesty not guilty of?" ‡ That is, he is guilty of those sins which are considered as the most heinous, as well as of those that are considered ordinary sins. Therefore the words of so sinful a person can have no weight in the discussion of the legality of rites.

### SECTION VIII.

You have stated in p. 2, that in the same manner as when part of a village or of a piece of cloth has been burnt, the village or piece of cloth is said to be burnt, so if a portion of the pile is inflamed, the whole pile may be said to be flaming. Therefore, it may with propriety be affirmed, that widows do in this country ascend the flaming pile.

\* I reply. You may afford gratification to those who take delight in woman-murder by such a quibble, but how can you avoid divine punishment by thus playing upon words?—for we find in the text of Hareet and of Vishnoo, the phrase "Pruvivesh

\* न अध्रुवैः प्राप्यते हि ध्रुवं तत । कठश्रुतिः ।

† आद्यन्तो नामरूपाणि यान्ति सन्मयतां जनाः ।

अध्रुवाहस्तु जाताहि ध्रुवं नैवीपजायते ॥ अतृतिः ।

‡ शोऽन्यथा सन्ममात्मानमन्यथा प्रतिपद्यते ।

किन्ति न ज कृतं पापं श्रीरणात्मापहारिणा ॥ अतृतिः

hootasunum," which means *entering into flames*, and the term "Sumaroheddhootasunum," signifying *ascending the flames*. You have interpreted these directions in this way ;—that, at a considerable distance from the pile, fire may be placed, and a piece of grass or rope may connect the fire with the pile ; and that thus, by ascending the pile, which has not been in the smallest degree affected by the fire, the widow may fulfil the direction of ascending and entering the flaming pile. But I beg to remark, that both in the vulgar dialect and in Sunskrit, the word "Pruvesh" expresses only the introgression of one substance into another ; as for example, "Grihu pruvesh koriachhilam," *I entered the house* ; the word entered cannot be used unless I actually passed into the house. If a long bamboo be attached to the house and a rope be fastened to that bamboo, no one can in any language say, that in merely touching that rope or bamboo he has entered that house. If a single billet of wood belonging to the pile were indeed inflamed, then you might say, according to your quibble regarding the burning of the cloth and of the village, that the pile was inflamed, and the flaming pile entered ; but even this is by no means the case, in the mode in which your pile is used. Unless, however, the pile is so completely in fire that the flames may surround the whole of her body, the woman cannot be said to enter into flame. You must then, before you can justify your murder of helpless women, prepare a new dictionary ; but there is no great probability of its interpretations being adopted by men of knowledge.

Towards the end of the 28th page you assert, that those who tie down the woman to the pile according to the custom of the country, are not guilty of violation of the Shastrus : for it is to be understood from the words of Hareet before quoted, that until her body be burnt, the widow cannot be delivered from female form, which implies that her body ought to be completely consumed ; and that it is on this account that those who burn her make her fast to the pile, lest by accident any part of the dead body should fall out of the pile, and fail of being consumed,

and in that case the burning be incomplete. This practice of tying down, therefore, is also conformable to the Shastru ; and those who, in burning the woman, make her fast to the pile, are not therein guilty of any sin, but rather perform a pious act. In support of this assertion you have quoted the words of Apustumbu, signifying that he who performs an act prescribed by the Shastrus, or he who persuades or permits another to perform a prescribed act, ascends to heaven ; and he who commits an act forbidden by the Shastru, or who persuades or permits another to perform a prohibited action, sinks to hell.

I reply. You mean to say, that it is not in order to avoid the danger of the widow's flying from the pile from fear of the flames, or from pain, that she is made fast—but merely, lest any fragments of the body should fall from the pile unburnt, that she is tied down to the pile while alive. I ask, is it with an iron chain that the woman is made fast, or with a common rope ? For by securing the body by means of iron, the danger of portions of it being scattered from the pile may undoubtedly be avoided. But if, on the contrary, the body is bound with a common rope, the rope will be consumed before life has altogether quitted the body, and the rope, when so burned, can be of no use in retaining within the pile, the members of the body. So far have Pundits been infatuated, in attempting to give the appearance of propriety to improper actions, that they have even attempted to make people believe, that a rope may remain unconsumed amidst a flaming fire, and prevent the members of a body from being dispersed from the pile. Men of sense may now judge of the truth of the reason to which you ascribe the practice of tying down widows. All people in the world are not blind, and those who will go and behold the mode in which you tie down women to the pile, will readily perceive the truth or falsehood of the motives you assign for the practice. A little reflection ought to have convinced you of the light in which such an argument must be viewed, even by those of your friends who have the smallest regard for truth. As for the text you have



quoted from Apustumbu, it might have, with more propriety been cited by us, because it is established by that passage, that those who commit, persuade to, or permit an improper action, descend to hell ; for those that are guilty of wilful woman-murder, by tying women down with ropes, and burning them to death, a practice unauthorized by the Shastrus, and considered as most heinous, and those who persuade or permit others to do so, are certainly obnoxious to the denunciation of Apustumbu. The pretext of custom of the country, or of the object of preventing portions of the body from being scattered, will not exculpate them.

You have written, in page 29, that those who, by the permission of the widow, increase the flames by throwing wood or straw on the pile, are meritorious : for he who without reward assists another in a pious act, is to be esteemed most meritorious. In confirmation, you have quoted an anecdote of the Mutshyu Pooran, that a goldsmith, by affording his gratuitous assistance in a pious act, obtained a great reward. To this I have already replied : for if those who voluntarily commit woman-murder, by tying down a widow to the pile, and holding her down with bamboos to be burnt to death, are to be reckoned as performers of a pious act, those who assist them in so doing must be esteemed meritorious ; but if this be a most heinous and debased crime, the promoters of it must certainly reap the fruits of woman-murder.

In your concluding paragraph you have quoted three texts, to prove the continual observance of this practice during all ages. The first recounting, that a dove entered into the flaming pile of her deceased husband. The second, that when Dhriturashtru was burning in the flames of his hermitage, his wife, Gandharee, threw herself into the fire. The wives of Busoodev (the father of Krishnu), of Buluram, of Prudyoomnu, and of others, entered the flaming piles of their respective husbands. These three instances occurred, as narrated by the Pooran writers, within intervals of a few years towards the close of the

Dwapur Yoog. You ought then to have quoted other instances, to shew the continual observance of this practice throughout all ages. Let that be as it may, you yourself cannot fail to know, that in former ages there were, as in later times, some who devoted themselves to the attainment of final beatitude, and others to the acquisition of future pleasure. Some too were virtuous, and some sinful ; some believers, some sceptics. Amongst those, both men and women, who performed rites for reward, after enjoying pleasures in heaven, have again fallen to earth. Those Shastrus themselves declare this fact ; but in the Shastrus that teach the path to final beatitude, the performance of rites for the sake of reward is positively forbidden. According to these Shastrus, numberless women, in all ages, who were desirous of final beatitude, by living as ascetics, attained their object. Evidence of this is to be found in the Muhabharut and other works : “ The widows of the heroic *Kooros*, who fell valiantly with their faces to the foe, and were translated to the heaven of Bruhma, performed only the prescribed ceremonies with water,”\* and did not burn themselves on the piles of their husbands. I have moreover to request your attention to the fact, that in the three instances you have quoted, the very words “ entered into fire ” are used. In those three cases, then, it appears that the widows actually entered the flames, and therefore, whatever widow in the present time does not enter the fire, but is burnt to death by others tying her down to the pile, has not performed the ceremony according to the ancient practice you have instanced ; and from rites so performed she cannot even be entitled to the temporary enjoyment of heavenly pleasures ; and those who tie her down, and, pressing on her with bamboos, kill her, must, according to all Shastrus, be considered guilty of the heinous crime of woman-murder.

## SECTION IX.

*Advocate.* I alluded, in p. 18, l. 18, to the real reason for our anxiety to persuade widows to follow their husbands, and for our endeavours to burn them, pressed down with ropes : viz. that women are by nature of inferior understanding, without resolution, unworthy of trust, subject to passions, and void of virtuous knowledge ; they according to the precepts of the Shastru, are not allowed to marry again after the demise of their husbands, and consequently despair at once of all worldly pleasure ; hence it is evident, that death to these unfortunate widows is preferable to existence ; for the great difficulty which a widow may experience by living a purely ascetic life, as prescribed by the Shastrus, is obvious ; therefore, if she do not perform Concremation, it is probable that she may be guilty of such acts as may bring disgrace upon her paternal and maternal relations, and those that may be connected with her husband. Under these circumstances, we instruct them from their early life in the idea of Concremation, holding out to them heavenly enjoyments in company with their husbands, as well as the beatitude of their relations, both by birth and marriage, and their reputation in this world. From this many of them, on the death of their husbands, become desirous of accompanying them ; but to remove every chance of their trying to escape from the blazing fire, in burning them we first tie them down to the pile.

*Opponent.* The reason you have now assigned for burning widows alive is indeed your true motive, as we are well aware ; but the faults which you have imputed to women are not planted in their constitution by nature ; it would be, therefore, grossly criminal to condemn that sex to death merely from precaution. By ascribing to them all sorts of improper conduct, you have indeed successfully persuaded the Hindoo community to look down upon them as contemptible and mischievous creatures, whence they have been subjected to constant miseries. I have, therefore, to offer a few remarks on this head.

Women are in general inferior to men in bodily strength and energy ; consequently the male part of the community, taking advantage of their corporeal weakness, have denied to them those excellent merits that they are entitled to by nature, and afterwards they are apt to say that women are naturally incapable of acquiring those merits. But if we give the subject consideration, we may easily ascertain whether or not your accusation against them is consistent with justice. As to their inferiority in point of understanding, when did you ever afford them a fair opportunity of exhibiting their natural capacity ? How then can you accuse them of want of understanding ? If, after instruction in knowledge and wisdom, a person cannot comprehend or retain what has been taught him, we may consider him as deficient ; but as you keep women generally void of education and acquirements, you cannot, therefore, in justice pronounce on their inferiority. On the contrary, Leelavutee, Bhanoomutee, the wife of the prince of Kurnat, and that of Kalidas, are celebrated for their thorough knowledge of all the Shastrus : moreover in the Vrihudaranyuk Opunishud of the Ujoor Ved it is clearly stated, that Yagnuvulkyu imparted divine knowledge of the most difficult nature to his wife Maitreyee, who was able to follow and completely attain it !

Secondly. You charge them with want of resolution, at which I feel exceedingly surprised : for we constantly perceive, in a country where the name of death makes the male shudder, that the female, from her firmness of mind, offers to burn with the corpse of her deceased husband ; and yet you accuse those women of deficiency in point of resolution.

Thirdly. With regard to their trustworthiness, let us look minutely into the conduct of both sexes, and we may be enabled to ascertain which of them is the most frequently guilty of betraying friends. If we enumerate such women in each village or town as have been deceived by men, and such men as have been betrayed by women, I presume that the number of the deceived women would be found ten times greater than that of

the betrayed men. Men are, in general, able to read and write, and manage public affairs, by which means they easily promulgate such faults as women occasionally commit, but never consider as criminal the misconduct of men towards women. One fault they have, it must be acknowledged ; which is, by considering others equally void of duplicity as themselves, to give their confidence too readily, from which they suffer much misery, even so far that some of them are misled to suffer themselves to be burnt to death.

In the fourth place, with respect to their subjection to the passions, this may be judged of by the custom of marriage as to the respective sexes ; for one man may marry two or three, sometimes even ten wives and upwards ; while a woman, who marries but one husband, desires at his death to follow him, forsaking all worldly enjoyments, or to remain leading the austere life of an ascetic.

Fifthly. The accusation of their want of virtuous knowledge is an injustice. Observe what pain, what slighting, what contempt, and what afflictions their virtue enables them to support ! How many Kooleen Brahmuns are there who marry ten or fifteen wives for the sake of money, that never see the greater number of them after the day of marriage, and visit others only three or four times in the course of their life. Still amongst those women, most, even without seeing or receiving any support from their husbands, living dependent on their fathers or brothers, and suffering much distress, continue to preserve their virtue ; and when Brahmuns, or those of other tribes, bring their wives to live with them, what misery do the women not suffer ? At marriage the wife is recognized as half of her husband, but in after-conduct they are treated worse than inferior animals. For the woman is employed to do the work of a slave in the house, such as, in her turn, to clean the place very early in the morning, whether cold or wet, to scour the dishes, to wash the floor, to cook night and day, to prepare and serve food for her husband, father, and mother-in-law,

sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, and friends and connections ! (for amongst Hindoos more than in other tribes relations long reside together, and on this account quarrels are more common amongst brothers respecting their worldly affairs.) If in the preparation or serving up of the victuals they commit the smallest fault, what insult do they not receive from their husband, their mother-in-law, and the younger brothers of their husband ? After all the male part of the family have satisfied themselves, the women content themselves with what may be left, whether sufficient in quantity or not. Where Brahmuns or Kayustus are not wealthy, their women are obliged to attend to their cows, and to prepare the cow-dung for firing. In the afternoon they fetch water from the river or tank, and at night perform the office of menial servants in making the beds. In case of any fault or omission in the performance of those labours they receive injurious treatment. Should the husband acquire wealth, he indulges in criminal amours to her perfect knowledge and almost under her eyes, and does not see her perhaps once a month. As long as the husband is poor, she suffers every kind of trouble, and when he becomes rich she is altogether heart-broken. All this pain and affliction their virtue alone enables them to support. Where a husband takes two or three wives to live with him, they are subjected to mental miseries and constant quarrels. Even this distressed situation they virtuously endure. Sometimes it happens that the husband, from a preference for one of his wives, behaves cruelly to another. Amongst the lower classes, and those even of the better class who have not associated with good company, the wife, on the slightest fault, or even on bare suspicion of her misconduct, is chastised as a thief. Respect to virtue and their reputation generally makes them forgive even this treatment. If, unable to bear such cruel usage, a wife leaves her husband's house to live separately from him, then the influence of the husband with the magisterial authority is generally sufficient to place her again in his hands ; when, in revenge

for her quitting him, he seizes every pretext to torment her in various ways, and sometimes even puts her privately to death. These are facts occurring every day, and not to be denied. What I lament is, that, seeing the women thus dependent and exposed to every misery, you feel for them no compassion, that might exempt them from being tied down and burnt to death.

ABSTRACT  
OF  
THE ARGUMENTS  
REGARDING  
THE BURNING OF WIDOWS,  
CONSIDERED AS A RELIGIOUS RITE.

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CALCUTTA :

1830.





ABSTRACT  
OF  
THE ARGUMENTS, &c.

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SEVERAL ESSAYS, Tracts, and Letters, written in defence of or against the practice of burning Hindoo widows alive, have for some years past attracted the attention of the public. The arguments therein adduced by the parties being necessarily scattered, a complete view of the question cannot be easily attained by such readers as are precluded by their immediate avocations from bestowing much labour in acquiring information on the subject. Although the practice itself has now happily ceased to exist under the Government of Bengal\*, nevertheless, it seems still desirable that the substance of those publications should be condensed in a concise but comprehensive manner, so that enquirers may, with little difficulty, be able to form a just conclusion, as to the true light in which this practice is viewed in the religion of Hindoos. I have, therefore, made an attempt to accomplish this object, hoping that the plan pursued may be found to answer this end.

The first point to be ascertained is, whether or not the practice of burning widows alive on the pile and with the corpse of their husbands, is imperatively enjoined by the Hindoo religion? To this question even the staunch advocates for Concremation must reluctantly give a negative reply, and unavoidably concede the practice to the option of widows. This admission on their part is owing to two principal considerations, which it is now

\* The administration to which this distinguished merit is due, consisted of Lord W. C. Bentinck, Governor General, Viscount Combermere, Commander in Chief, W. B. Bayley, Esq., and Sir C. T. Metcalfe, Members of Council.



question, we should first refer to the Veds, whose authority is considered paramount, and we find in them a passage most pointed and decisive against Concremation, declaring that "From a desire, during life, of future fruition, life ought not to be destroyed." (Vide Mitakshura, ch. i.)\* While the advocates of Concremation quote a passage from the Veds, of a very abstruse nature, in support of their position, which is as follows : "O fire, let these women, with bodies anointed with clarified butter, eyes coloured with collyrium and void of tears, enter thee, the parent of water †, that they may not be separated from their husbands, themselves sinless, and jewels amongst women." ‡ This passage (if genuine) does not, in the first place, enjoin widows to offer themselves as sacrifices ; secondly, no allusion whatever is made in it to voluntary death by a widow *with the corpse of her husband* ; thirdly, the phrase "these women" in the passage, literally implies women then present ; fourthly, some commentators consider the passage as conveying an allegorical allusion to the constellations of the moon's path, which are invariably spoken of in Sanskrit in the feminine gender :—butter implying the milky path, collyrium meaning unoccupied space between one star and another, husbands signifying the more splendid of the heavenly bodies, and entering the fire, or, properly speaking, ascending it, indicating the rise of the constellations through the south-east horizon, considered as the abode of fire. Whatever may be the real purport of this passage, no one ever ventured to give it an interpretation as *commanding* widows to burn themselves on the pile and with the corpse of their husbands.

We next direct attention to the Smritee, as next in authority to the Veds. Munoo, whose authority supersedes that of

\* मन्वादिह न पुराणैः स्वःकामो प्रियात् ।

† In Sanskrit writings, water is represented as originating in fire.

‡ इमा नारीरविधवाः सुपत्नीवाञ्छनेन सर्पिषा सविशन्त्यनश्रवा अनमोरा सुरमा चारोहन् यानयो योनिमपिः ।

other lawgivers, enjoins widows to live a virtuous life, as already quoted. Yagnuvulkyu and some others have adopted the same mode of exhortation. On the other hand, Ungira recommends the practice of Concremation, saying, "That a woman who, on the death of her husband, *ascends the burning pile* with him, is exalted to heaven as equal to Uroondhuti."\* So Vyas says, "A pigeon devoted to her husband, after his death, *entered the flames*, and, ascending to heaven, she there found her husband."† "She who follows her husband to another world, shall dwell in a region of glory for so many years as there are hairs in the human body, or thirty-five millions."‡ Vishnoo, the saint, lays down this rule, "After the death of her husband, a wife should live as an ascetic or ascend his pile."§ Hareet and others have followed Ungira in recommending Concremation.

The above quoted passages, from Ungira and others, commend Concremation on the part of widows, as means to obtain future carnal fruition ; and, accordingly, previous to their ascent on the pile, all widows invariably and solemnly declare future fruition as their object in Concremation. But the Bhugvudgeeta, whose authority is considered the most sacred by Hindoos of all persuasions, repeatedly condemns rites performed for fruition. I here quote a few passages of that book. "All those ignorant persons who attach themselves to the words of the Shastrus that convey promises of fruition, consider those extravagant and alluring passages as leading to real happiness, and say, besides them there is no other reality. Agitated in their minds by these desires, they believe the abodes of the celestial gods to be the chief object, and they devote themselves to those

\* मृते भर्तारि या नारी समारोहं हुताशनं ।

सा ह्यन्वतो समाचारा स्वर्गलोके महीयते ॥

† पतिव्रता संप्रदीप्तं प्रविशेश हुताशनं ।

तच्च चित्राङ्गदधरं भर्तारं सान्त्वयत ॥

‡ तिस्रः कोट्यर्हकोटी च यानि लोमानि मानवे ।

मावन्माब्दानि सा स्वर्गे भर्तारं यातुमश्नुति ॥

§ मृते भर्तारि ब्रह्मचर्यं तदन्वारीह्यं वा ।

texts which treat of ceremonies and their fruits, and entice by promises of enjoyment. Such people can have no real confidence in the Supreme Being." \* "Observers of rites, after the completion of their rewards, return to earth. Therefore they, for the sake of rewards, repeatedly ascend to heaven and return to the world, and cannot obtain eternal bliss."† (1)

\* यामिमां पुष्टितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः । वेदवाद्भरताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीतिवादिनः ॥  
कामात्मानः स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मेफलप्रदा । क्रियाविशेषवहुलां भोगैश्चर्यगतिं प्रति ॥  
भोगैश्चर्यप्रसक्तानां तथापहतचेतसां । व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥  
† ते वं मुक्ता स्वर्गलोकं विशालं क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोके विशन्ति ।  
एवं देवीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥

(1) We give below the text of Rughoonundun describing how the ceremony of Concremation should be performed, with the 'solemn declaration' referred to above, which the widow had to make before ascending the pyre :—

पुत्रादिना स्वर्गलोक्तविधिना अग्नौ दत्ते ज्वलितायां भर्तृषितायां सङ्गन्ती साध्वी  
जाता परिहितधीतवासोयुगा कुशहस्ता प्राङ्मुखी उदङ्मुखी वा दैवतोर्ध्वनाचाना  
तिलजलकुशचयमादाय ओम् तत्सदिति ब्राह्मणैरुच्चारिते नारायणं संस्तुत्य नमोदासुकै  
मासि अमुके पत्नेऽमुकतियौ अमुकगोत्रा श्रीमती अमुकौ देवो अरुन्धतीसमाचारत्वपूर्वक-  
स्वर्गलोकमहीयमानत्वमानवाधिकरणकलोमसमसंख्याव्यावच्छिन्नस्वर्गवासभर्तृसहितमोद-  
मानत्वमाहवित्तशूरकुलवयपूतत्वचतुर्दशेन्द्रावच्छिन्नकालाधिकरणकाप्सरोगणसूयमानत्व-  
पतिसहितमौकुलमानत्वब्रह्मकृतमन्ननिवन्नपतिपूतत्वकामा भर्तृज्वलक्षितारोहणमहं करिष्ये  
इति अनुसरणे तु भर्तृज्वलक्षितारोहणं मित्यत्र ज्वलक्षिताप्रवेशेन भर्तृनुसरणं मिति  
सङ्ख्या षष्ठौ लोकपाला आदित्यचन्द्रान्नागान्याकाशभूमिजलहृदयावस्थितान्तर्यामि-  
पुत्रचयमदिनराविसन्धाधर्मो यूयं साक्षिणो भवत ज्वलक्षितारोहणेन भर्तृशरीरागु-  
गमनमहं करोमीति अनुसरणे तु भर्तृशरीरागुगमनं मित्यत्र भर्तृनुसरणमित्याद्यं  
ज्वलक्षिताग्निं विप्रदक्षिणोक्त्य ओम् इमा नारोरविधवाः सुपत्नीराज्ञनेन सर्पिषा सन्धू-  
शन्तां अन्नश्वो अन्नमीवाः सुशेवा पारोहन्तु जनयो योनिमये इति ऋग्वेदोक्तमन्ते ओम्  
इमाः पतिव्रताः पुण्याः स्त्रियो या याः सुशोभनाः सङ्गभर्तृशरीरेण संविशन्तु विभावसुम्  
इति पौराणिके ऋग्वेदे ब्राह्मणेन पठिते नमीनम इत्याद्यं ज्वलक्षितां समारोहेत् ।

सहितत्वम् ।

Fire having been applied by the son or other relation according to the rules laid down in the *Grihya* rituals followed by the family, and the funeral pyre having blazed forth, the virtuous widow, wishing to accompany her husband, having bathed, and having put on a pair of cloths washed clean, with the *kusa* grass in her hand, having sipped water by the tips of her

Munoo repeats the same. "Whatever act is performed for the sake of gratification in this world or the next, is called Pruvurtuk, as leading to the temporary enjoyment of the mansions of gods; and those which are performed according to the knowledge respecting God are called Nivurtuk, as means to procure release from the five elements of this body; that is, they obtain eternal bliss."\*

The author of the Mitakshura, a work which is considered

\* इह वासुव वा कास्यं प्रवृत्तं कर्म्म कीर्त्यते । निष्कामं ज्ञानपूर्वकम् निवृत्तमुपदिश्यते ।  
प्रवृत्तं कर्म्म संसेव्य देवानामिति सार्धं तां । निवृत्तं सेवमानस्तु भूतान्वत्येति पञ्च वै ।

fingers with her face turned towards the east or the north, and having taken in her hand the *tila* seed, water and three *kusa* grass, when the Brahmins have pronounced *Om Tut Sat*, meditating on *Narayana*, should say, '*Namo*: today, this month, this day of full or new moon, I, of such a *gotra*, of this name, desiring to attain the glory of the heavens to be obtained by acting like *Aroondhatee*, to dwell in the regions of bliss, rejoicing with my husband as many years as there are hairs in the human body, to purify the three families of my 'mother, father, and father-in-law, to be glorified by the *Apsaras* as long as fourteen *Indras* last, to enjoy the company of my husband and to purify my husband from the sins of Brahmin-murder, ingratitude and betrayal of friends, do ascend the flaming funeral pyre of my husband: (in the case of postcremation instead of 'I ascend the flaming funeral pyre of my husband' the widow should say 'I follow my husband in death by entering the flaming pyre':) With this solemn declaration she should then make the following invocation, "O ye eight Lokapalas! O thou the sun, the moon, the air, the fire, the atmosphere, the earth, the water, the Being who resides in the heart and knows it, the death, the day, the night, the twilights both evening and morning, and the religion! be ye witness, I follow the body of my husband by ascending the flaming funeral pyre", (in the case of postcremation, instead of 'I follow the body of my husband' the widow should say 'I follow my husband in death',) and go three times round the fire of the flaming pyre, and then, while the Brahmins recite the following *mantra* of the Rig Veda—"Let these women, not widowed, having good husbands, having applied clarified butter in the eyes for collyrium, without tears on their eyes, without any disease. fit for all attentions, being wives, ascend, after this, their proper place," and also the following *mantra* from the Pooran,—“Let these women who are pious, devoted to their husbands, and handsome, enter the fire with the body of their husbands,” she uttering yea yea (to these recitations) should ascend the flaming funeral pyre.

as a standard of Hindoo Law throughout Hindoostan, referring on one hand to the authority of Munoo, Yagnuvulkyu, the Bhugvudgeeta, and similar sacred writings, and to the passages of Ungira, Hareet, and Vyas on the other hand, and after having weighed both sides of the question, declares that "The widow who is not desirous of eternal beatitude, but who wishes only for a perishable and small degree of future fruition, is authorized to accompany her husband."\* So that the Smarttu Rughoonundun, the modern expounder of law in Bengal, classes Concremation among the rites holding out promises of fruition; and this author thus inculcates: "Learned men should not endeavour to persuade the ignorant to perform rites holding out promises of fruition."† Hence, Concremation, in their opinion, is the least virtuous act that a widow can perform.‡

The third and the last point to be ascertained is, whether or not *the mode* of Concremation prescribed by Hareet and others was ever duly observed. The passages recommending Concremation, as quoted by these expounders of law, require that a widow, resolving to die after the demise of her husband, should

\* अतश्च मीक्षमनिष्कन्ता अनित्यान्सुखरूपस्वर्गार्थिन्याः सहस्ररथानुमरश्चयोरधिकार इतरकाम्यानुष्ठानवत् ।

† पण्डितेनापि मूर्खः काम्ये कर्मणि न प्रवर्तयितव्यः ।

‡ Hindoos are persuaded to believe that Vyas, considered as an inspired writer among the ancients, composed and left behind him numerous and voluminous works under different titles, as Muha-poorans, Itihashes, Sunhitas, Smriti, &c. &c. to an extent that no man, during the ordinary course of life, could prepare. These, however, with a few exceptions, exist merely in name, and those that are genuine bear the commentaries of celebrated authors. So the Tantrus, or works ascribed to Shivu as their author, are esteemed as consisting of innumerable millions of volumes, though only a very few, comparatively, are to be found. Debased characters among this unhappy people, taking advantage of this circumstance, have secretly composed forged works and passages, and published them as if they were genuine, with the view of introducing new doctrines, new rites, or new prescripts of secular law. Although they have frequently succeeded by these means in working on the minds of the ignorant, yet the learned have never admitted the authority of any passage or work alleged to be sacred, unless it has been quoted or expounded by one of the acknowledged and authoritative commentators. It is now unhappily reported, that some advocates for the destruction of widows, finding their cause unsupported by the passages cited by the author of the Mitakshura, by the Smarttu Rughoonundun, or by other expounders of Hindoo law, have dis-



*voluntarily ascend\** and enter the flames† to destroy her existence ; allowing her, at the same time, an opportunity of retracting her resolution, should her courage fail from the alarming sight or effect of the flames, and of returning to her relatives, performing a penance for abandoning the sacrifice,‡ or bestowing the value of a cow on a Brahmun.§ Hence, as *voluntarily ascending* upon and *entering into the flames* are described as indispensably necessary for a widow in the performance of this rite, the violation of one of these provisions renders the act mere suicide, and implicates, in the guilt of female murder, those that assist in its perpetration, even according to the above quoted authorities, which are themselves of an inferior order. But no one will venture to assert, that the provisions, prescribed in the passages adduced, have ever been observed ; that is, no widow ever voluntarily ascended on and entered into the flames in the fulfilment of this rite. The advocates for Concremation have been consequently driven to the necessity of taking refuge in *usage*, as justifying both suicide and female murder, the most heinous of crimes.

We should not omit the present opportunity of offering up thanks to Heaven, whose protecting arm has rescued our weaker sex from cruel murder, under the cloak of religion, and our character, as a people, from the contempt and pity with which it has been regarded, on account of this custom, by all civilized nations on the surface of the globe.

gracefully adopted the trick of coining passages in the name of the Poo-rans or Tuntrus, conveying doctrines not only directly opposed to the decisive expositions of these celebrated teachers of law, but also evidently at variance with the purport of the genuine sacred passages which they have quoted. The passages thus forged are said to be calculated to give a preference to Concremation over virtuous life. I regret to understand that some persons belonging to the party opposing this practice, are reported to have had recourse to the same unworthy artifice, under the erroneous plea that stratagem justifies stratagem.

\* समारोहं नृणां । Ungira. + पतिव्रता संप्रदीप्तं प्रविशेत् हुताशनं । Vyas.

‡ चित्तवृत्त्या वा नारी भीष्मादिचरिता भवेत् ।

मानापत्येन युहेत् तस्मादि पापकर्षणः ।

§ मानापत्यव्रतामृत्तो धेनुं दद्यात् पयस्विनीं ।

धेनोरभावे दातव्यं तुल्यं मूत्रं न च मयः ।

KATYAYUNU. "The father being dead, the mother should inherit an equal share with the son."\*

NARUDU. "After the death of a husband, a mother should receive a share equal to that of each of his sons."†

VISHNUG THE LEGISLATOR. "Mothers should be receivers of shares according to the portion allowed to the sons."‡

VRIHUSPUTI. "After his (the father's) death a mother, the parent of his sons, should be entitled to an equal share with his sons; their step-mothers also to equal shares : but daughters to a fourth part of the shares of the sons."§

VYAS. "The wives of a father by whom he has no male issue, are considered as entitled to equal shares with his sons, and all the grand-mothers (*including the mothers and step-mothers of the father*), are said to be entitled as mothers.||

This Mooni seems to have made this express declaration of rights of step-mothers, omitting those of mothers, under the idea that the latter were already sufficiently established by the direct authority of preceding lawgivers.

We come to the moderns.

The author of the Dayubhagu and the writer of the Dayututtwu, the modern expounders of Hindoo law (whose opinions are considered by the natives of Bengal as standard authority in the division of property among heirs) have thus limited the rights allowed to widows by the above ancient legislators. When a person is willing to divide his property among his heirs during his life-time, he should entitle only those wives by whom he has

\* माता च पितरि प्रीते पुत्रतुल्यांश्हारिणी ।

† समांश्हारिणी माता पुत्राणां स्यान्मृते पतौ ।

‡ मातरः पुत्रभागानुसारभागहारिणः ।

§ तदभावे तु जननी तनयांश्च समांशिनौ ।

समांशा मातरस्त्वेषां तुरीयांश्चास्तु कन्यकाः ।

|| अस्तुतास्तु पितुः पत्न्याः समांशाः प्रकीर्तिताः ।

पितामहश्च ताः सर्व्या मादतुल्याः प्रकीर्तिताः ।

no issue, to an equal share with his sons ; but if he omit such a division, those wives can have no claim to the property he leaves. These two modern expounders lay stress upon a passage of Yagnuvulkyu, which requires a father to allot equal shares to his wives, in case he divides his property during his life, whereby they connect the term "of a father," in the above quoted passage of Vyas, *viz.*, "the wives of a father, &c." with the term "division" understood, that is, the wives by whom he has no son, are considered in the division made by a father, as entitled to equal shares with his sons ; and that when sons may divide property among themselves after the demise of their father, they should give an equal share to their mother only, neglecting step-mothers in the division. Here the expounders did not take into their consideration any proper provision for step-mothers, who have naturally less hope of support from their step-sons than mothers can expect from their own children.

In the opinion of these expounders even a mother of a single son should not be entitled to any share. The whole property should, in that case, devolve on the son ; and in case that son should die after the succession to the property, his son or wife should inherit it. The mother in that case should be left totally dependent on her son or on her son's wife. Besides, according to the opinion of these expounders, if more than one son should survive, they can deprive their mother of her title, by continuing to live as a joint family (which has been often the case,) as the right of a mother depends, as they say, on division, which depends on the will of the sons.

Some of our cotemporaries, (whose opinion is received as a verdict by Judicial Courts,) have still further reduced the right of a mother to almost nothing, declaring, as I understand, that if a person die, leaving a widow and a son or sons, and also one or more grand-sons, whose father is not alive, the property so left is to be divided among his sons and his grand-sons, his widow in this case being entitled to no share in the property, though she might have claimed an equal share, had a division

taken place among those surviving sons and the father of the grand-son while he was alive.\* They are said to have founded their opinion on the above passage, entitling a widow to a share when property is to be divided among *sons*.

In short, a widow, according to the expositions of the law, can receive nothing when her husband has no issue by her ; and in case he dies leaving only one son by his wife, or having had more sons, one of whom happened to die leaving issue, she shall, in these cases, also have no claim to the property ; and again, should any one leave more than one surviving son, and they, being unwilling to allow a share to the widow, keep the property undivided, the mother can claim nothing in this instance also. But when a person dies, leaving two or more sons, and all of them survive and be inclined to allot a share to their mother, her right is in this case only valid. Under these expositions, and with such limitations, both step-mothers and mothers have, in reality, been left destitute in the division of their husband's property, and the right of a widow exists in theory only among the learned, but unknown to the populace.

The consequence is, that a woman who is looked up to as the sole mistress by the rest of a family one day, on the next, becomes dependent on her sons, and subject to the slights of her daughters-in-law. She is not authorized to expend the most trifling sum or dispose of an article of the least value, without the consent of her son or daughter-in-law, who were all subject to her authority but the day before. Cruel sons often wound the feelings of their dependent mothers, deciding in favor of their own wives, when family disputes take place between their mothers and wives. Step-mothers, who often are numerous on account of polygamy being allowed in these countries, are still more shamefully neglected in general by their step-sons, and

\* This exposition has been (I am told) set aside by the Supreme Court, in consequence of the Judges having prudently applied for the opinions of other Pundits, which turned out to be at variance with those of the majority of the regular advisers of the Court in points of Hindoo law.

sometimes dreadfully treated by their sisters-in-law who have fortunately a son or sons by their husband.

It is not from religious prejudices and early impressions only, that Hindoo widows burn themselves on the piles of their deceased husbands, but also from their witnessing the distress in which widows of the same rank in life are involved, and the insults and slights to which they are daily subjected, that they become in a great measure regardless of their existence after the death of their husbands : and this indifference, accompanied with the hope of future reward held out to them, leads them to the horrible act of suicide. These restraints on female inheritance encourage, in a great degree, polygamy, a frequent source of the greatest misery in native families ; a grand object of Hindoos being to secure a provision for their male offspring, the law, which relieves them from the necessity of giving an equal portion to their wives, removes a principal restraint on the indulgence of their inclinations in respect to the number they marry. Some of them, especially Brahmuns of higher birth, marry ten, twenty, or thirty women,\* either for some small consideration, or merely to gratify their brutal inclinations, leaving a great many of them, both during their life-time and after their death, to the mercy of their own paternal relations. The evil consequences arising from such polygamy, the public may easily guess, from the nature of the fact itself, without my being reduced to the mortification of particularising those which are known by the native public to be of daily occurrence.

To these women there are left only three modes of conduct to pursue after the death of their husbands. 1st. To live a miserable life as entire slaves to others, without indulging any hope of support from another husband. 2ndly. To walk in the paths of unrighteousness for their maintenance and independence.

\* The horror of this practice is so painful to the natural feelings of man that even Madhuv Singh, the late Rajah of Tirhoot, (though a Brahmun himself), through compassion, took upon himself (I am told) within the last half century, to limit Brahmuns of his estate to four wives only.

3rdly. To die on the funeral pile of their husbands, loaded with the applause and honour of their neighbours. It cannot pass unnoticed by those who are acquainted with the state of society in India, that the number of female suicides in the single province of Bengal, when compared with those of any other British provinces, is almost ten to one : we may safely attribute this disproportion chiefly to the greater frequency of a plurality of wives among the natives of Bengal, and to their total neglect in providing for the maintenance of their females.

This horrible polygamy among Brahmuns is directly contrary to the law given by ancient authors ; for Yagnuvulkyu authorizes second marriages, while the first wife is alive, only under eight circumstances : 1st. The vice of drinking spirituous liquors. 2ndly. Incurable sickness. 3rdly. Deception. 4thly. Barrenness. 5thly. Extravagance. 6thly. The frequent use of offensive language. 7thly. Producing only female offsprings. Or, 8thly. Manifestation of hatred towards her husband.\*

Munoo, ch. 9th, v. 80th. "A wife who drinks any spirituous liquors, who acts immorally, who shows hatred to *her lord*, who is incurably diseased, who is mischievous, who wastes his property, may at all times be superseded by another wife."†

81st. "A barren wife may be superseded by another in the eighth year ; she, whose children are all dead, in the tenth ; she, who brings forth *only* daughters, in the eleventh ; she, who is accustomed to speak unkindly, without delay."‡

\* 82nd. "But she, who, though afflicted with illness, is beloved and virtuous, must never be disgraced, though she may be superseded by another wife with her own consent."§

\* सुरापो व्याधिता शूर्ता बन्ध्याथेन्नप्रमियंवदा ।

स्त्रीप्रसूयाधिवेत्तव्या पुरुषहेक्षिणी तथा ॥

† नद्यपासाधुडता च प्रतिकूला च या भवेत् ।

व्याधिता वाधिवेत्तव्या द्विचार्येणो च सर्व्वेदा ॥

‡ बन्ध्याष्टमेऽधिवेद्याऽष्टे दशमे तु सप्तप्रजा ।

एकादशे स्त्रीजननी सद्यस्त्वप्रियवादिनी ॥

§ या रोगिणी स्यात् द्विता सम्पत्ता चैव शीलतः ।

साहस्रव्याधिवेत्तव्या नावसान्या च कर्त्तिषित ॥

Had a Magistrate or other public officer been authorized by the rulers of the empire to receive applications for his sanction to a second marriage during the life of a first wife, and to grant his consent only on such accusations as the foregoing being substantiated, the above Law might have been rendered effectual, and the distress of the female sex in Bengal, and the number of suicides, would have been necessarily very much reduced.

According to the following ancient authorities a daughter is entitled to one-fourth part of the portion which a son can inherit.

VRIHUSPUTI. "The daughters should have the fourth part of the portion to *which the sons are entitled*."\*

VISHNOO. "The rights of unmarried daughters shall be proportioned according to the shares allotted to the sons."†

MUNOO, ch. 9th, v. 118. "To the unmarried daughters let their brothers give portions out of their own allotments respectively. Let each give a fourth part of his own distinct share, and they who feel disinclined to give this shall be condemned."‡

YAGNUVULKYU. "Let such brothers as are already purified by the essential rites of life, purify by the performance of those rites the brothers that are left *by their late father* unpurified; let them also purify the sisters by giving them a fourth part of their own portion."§

KATYAYUNU. || "A fourth part is declared to be the share of unmarried daughters, and three-fourths of the sons; if the

\* तुरीयांशसु कन्यकाः ।

† अनृदाश्च दुहितरः पुत्रभागादुसाराः ।

‡ स्त्रियोऽग्निभ्यस्तु कन्याभ्यः प्रददुर्भातरः पृथक् ।

स्त्रात् स्त्रादंशाच्चतुर्भागं पतिताः सुारदित्सवः ॥

§ असंस्कृतास्तु संस्कार्या भ्रातृभिः पूर्वसंस्कृतैः ।

भगिन्यश्च निजादंशाद्दत्तांश्चतुर्तुलीयकं ॥

|| कन्यकामा मदत्तानां चतुर्थोभाग उच्यते ।

पुत्राणाञ्च तृतीयो भागः स्त्राभ्यं स्वल्पधने स्मृतं ॥

fourth part of the property is so small as to be inadequate to defray the expenses attending their marriage the sons have an exclusive right to the property, but shall defray the marriage ceremony of the sisters. But the commentator on the Dayubhagu sets aside the right of the daughters, declaring that they are not entitled to any share in the property left by their fathers, but that the expenses attending their marriage should be defrayed by the brothers. He founds his opinion on the foregoing passage of Munoo and that of Yagnuvulkyu, which as he thinks, imply mere donation on the part of the brothers from their own portions for the discharge of the expenses of marriage.

In the practice of our contemporaries a daughter or a sister is often a source of emolument to the Brahmuns of less respectable caste, (who are most numerous in Bengal) and to the Kayusths of high caste. These so far from spending money on the marriage of their daughters or sisters, receive frequently considerable sums, and generally bestow them in marriage on those who can pay most.\* Such Brahmuns and Kayusths, I regret to say, frequently marry their female relations to men having natural defects or worn-out by old age or disease, merely from pecuniary considerations, whereby they either bring widowhood upon them soon after marriage or render their lives miserable. They not only degrade themselves by such cruel and unmanly conduct, but violate entirely express authorities of Munoo and all other ancient law-givers, a few of which I here quote.

MUNOO, ch. 3rd, v. 51. "Let no father, who knows the law, receive a gratuity, however small, for giving his daughter in marriage; since the man, who, through avarice, takes a gratuity for that purpose, is a seller of his offspring."†

\* Rajah Krissenchundru, the great-grandfather of the present ex-Rajah of Nudia, prevented this cruel practice of the sale of daughters and sisters throughout his estate.

† न कन्यायाः पिता विद्वान् गृह्णीयात् शुल्कमखपि ।

गृह्णन् हि शुल्कं स्त्रीभेन स्यान्नरोऽपत्यविक्रयो ॥



Ch. 9th, v. 98. "But even a man of the servile class ought not to receive a gratuity when he gives his daughter in marriage, since a father who takes a fee *on that occasion*, tacitly sells his daughter."\*

V. 100. "Nor, even in former births, have we heard the *virtuous* approve the tacit sale of a daughter for a price, under the name of nuptial gratuity."†

KASHYUPU. "Those who, infatuated by avarice, give their own daughters in marriage, for the sake of a gratuity, are the sellers of their daughters, the images of sin, and the perpetrators of a heinous iniquity."‡

Both common sense, and the law of the land designate such a practice as an actual sale of females; and the humane and liberal among Hindoos, lament its existence, as well as the annihilation of female rights in respect of inheritance introduced by modern expounders. They, however, trust, that the humane attention of Government will be directed to those evils which are chief sources of vice and misery and even of suicide among women; and to this they are encouraged to look forward by what has already been done in modifying, in criminal cases, some parts of the law enacted by Mohummudan Legislators, to the happy prevention of many cruel practices formerly established.

How distressing it must be to the female community and to those who interest themselves in their behalf, to observe daily that several daughters in a rich family can prefer no claim to any portion of the property, whether real or personal, left by their deceased father, if a single brother be alive: while they (if belonging to a Kooleen family or Brahmun of higher rank)

- \* आददोत न गृह्णीति शुल्कं दुहितरं ददत् ।  
शुल्कादि गृह्णन् कुर्वते कृत्रं दुहितविक्रयं ॥

- † नाशुश्रूयन् जात्येतत् पूर्वेष्वपि हि नन्दसु ।  
शुल्कसंज्ञेन मूलान् कृत्रं दुहितविक्रयं ॥

- ‡ शुल्केन ये प्रयच्छन्ति स्वसुतां लोभमोहिताः ।  
कन्याविक्रयिणः पापा महाकिल्बिषकारिणः ॥

BRIEF REMARKS  
REGARDING  
MODERN ENCROACHMENTS  
ON THE  
ANCIENT RIGHTS OF FEMALES,  
ACCORDING TO THE  
**Hindoo Law of Inheritance.**

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CALCUTTA :

1822.

In 1856 Babu Rumaprusad Roy, son of the illustrious author, reprinted this treatise with the following introduction :—

“ At this moment, when thousands of my countrymen have openly come forward to invoke the assistance of the Legislature to suppress the abominations of Kulin Polygamy, I have deemed it proper to re-print the following small Tract, published by the late Rajah Rammohun Roy in 1822. Those, who have joined in the application to the Legislative body, will have the satisfaction to see that my revered father, so far back as 1822, entertained sentiments on the subject of Kulin Polygamy similar to those which have now moved them to act in a way so independent of their prejudices, and so well fitted to confer incalculable benefits on the Hindu Community.

CALCUTTA,  
*July 12, 1856.*

RUMAPRUSAD ROY.”

BRIEF REMARKS  
READING  
MODERN ENCROACHMENTS  
ON THE  
ANCIENT RIGHTS OF FEMALES.

WITH a view to enable the public to form an idea of the state of civilization throughout the greater part of the empire of Hindoostan in ancient days,\* and of the subsequent gradual degradation introduced into its social and political constitution by arbitrary authorities, I am induced to give as an instance, the interest and care which our ancient legislators took in the promotion of the comfort of the female part of the community ; and to compare the laws of female inheritance which they enacted, and which afforded that sex the opportunity of enjoyment

\* At an early age of civilization, when the division into castes was first introduced among the inhabitants of India, the second tribe, who were appointed to defend and rule the country, having adopted arbitrary and despotic practices, the others revolted against them ; and under the personal command of the celebrated Purusooram, defeated the Royalists in several battles, and put cruelly to death almost all the males of that tribe. It was at last resolved that the legislative authority should be confined to the first class who could have no share in the actual government of the state, or in managing the revenue of the country under any pretence ; while the second tribe should exercise the executive authority. The consequence was, that India enjoyed peace and harmony for a great many centuries. The Brahmuns having no expectation of holding an office, or of partaking of any kind of political promotion, devoted their time to scientific pursuits and religious austerity, and lived in poverty. Freely

of life, with that which moderns and our cotemporaries have gradually introduced and established, to their complete privation, directly or indirectly, of most of those objects that render life agreeable.

All the ancient lawgivers unanimously award to a mother an equal share with her son in the property left by her deceased husband, in order that she may spend her remaining days independently of her children, as is evident from the following passages :

YAGNUVULKYU. "After the death of a father, let a mother also inherit an equal share with her sons in the division of the property *left by their father.*"\*

° पितृकृते विभज्यतां माताप्यशं समं हरेत् ।

associating with all the other tribes they were thus able to know their sentiments, and to appreciate the justness of their complaints, and thereby to lay down such rules as were required, which often induced them to rectify the abuses that were practised by the second tribe. But after the expiration of more than two thousand years, an absolute form of government came gradually again to prevail. The first class having been induced to accept employments in political departments, became entirely dependent on the second tribe, and so unimportant in themselves, that they were obliged to explain away the laws enacted by their fore-fathers, and to institute new rules according to the dictates of their contemporary princes. They were considered as merely nominal legislators, and the whole power, whether legislative or executive, was in fact exercised by the Rajpoots. This tribe exercised tyranny and oppression for a period of about a thousand years, when Moosulmans from Ghuznee and Ghore, invaded the country, and finding it divided among hundreds of petty princes, detested by their respective subjects, conquered them all successively, and introduced their own tyrannical system of government, destroying temples, universities and all other sacred and literary establishments. At present the whole empire (with the exception of a few provinces) has been placed under the British power, and some advantages have already been derived from the prudent management of its rulers, from whose general character a hope of future quiet and happiness is justly entertained. The succeeding generation will, however, be more adequate to pronounce on the real advantages of this government.

are exposed to be given in marriage to individuals who have already several wives and have no means of maintaining them.

Should a widow or a daughter wish to secure her right of maintenance, however limited, by having recourse to law, the learned Brahmuns, whether holding public situations in the courts or not, generally divide into two parties, one advocating the cause of those females and the other that of their adversaries. Sometimes in these or other matters respecting the law, if the object contended for be important, the whole community seems to be agitated by the exertions of the parties and of their respective friends in claiming the verdict of the law against each other. In general, however, a consideration of difficulties attending a law suit, which a native woman, particularly a widow, is hardly capable of surmounting, induces her to forego her right ; and if she continue virtuous, she is obliged to live in a miserable state of dependence, destitute of all the comforts of life ; it too often happens, however, that she is driven by constant unhappiness to seek refuge in vice.

At the time of the decennial settlement in the year 1793, there were among European gentlemen so very few acquainted with Sanskrit and Hindoo law that it would have been hardly possible to have formed a committee of European oriental scholars and learned Brahmuns, capable of deciding on points of Hindoo law. It was, therefore, highly judicious in Government to appoint Pundits in the different Zillah Courts, and Courts of Appeal, to facilitate the proceedings of Judges in regard to such subjects. But as we can now fortunately find many European gentlemen capable of investigating legal questions with but little assistance from learned Natives, how happy would it be for the Hindoo community, both male and female, were they to enjoy the benefits of the opinion of such gentlemen, when disputes arise, particularly on matters of inheritance.

Lest any one should infer from what I have stated, that I mean to impeach, universally, the character of the great body of learned Hindoos, I declare, positively, that this is far from my intention.

I only maintain, that the Native community place greater confidence in the honest judgment of the generality of European gentlemen than in that of their own countrymen. But, should the Natives receive the same advantages of education that Europeans generally enjoy, and be brought up in the same notions of honour, they will, I trust, be found, equally with Europeans, worthy of the confidence of their countrymen and the respect of all men.

ESSAY  
ON  
THE RIGHTS OF HINDOOS  
OVER  
ANCESTRAL PROPERTY,  
ACCORDING TO  
**THE LAW OF BENGAL.**

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CALCUTTA :

1830.





## PRELIMINARY NOTE.

THE translation into English, by the celebrated Mr. H. T. Colebrooke, of the DAYUBHAGU, a work on Succession, and of an extract from the MITAKSHURA, comprising so much of the latter as relates to Inheritance, has furnished the principal basis of the arguments used in the following pages. I have also referred occasionally to the valuable remarks of that eminently learned scholar, in his preface and notes added to the original work. In quoting the Institutes of Munoo, I have had recourse to the translation of this code of Law by the most venerable Sir WILLIAM JONES, that no doubt may be entertained as to the exactness of the interpretation. Only one text of Vrihusputi, the Legislator, and one passage quoted in another part of the *Mitakshura*, which has not been translated by Mr. Colebrooke, have been unavoidably rendered by myself. I have, however, taken the precaution to cite the original Sanskrit, that the reader may satisfy himself of the accuracy of my translation.



ON  
THE RIGHTS OF HINDOOS  
OVER  
ANCESTRAL PROPERTY.

INDIA, like other large empires, is divided into several extensive provinces, principally inhabited by Hindoos and Mussulmans. The latter admit but a small degree of variety in their domestic and religious usages, while the Hindoos of each province, particularly those of Bengal, are distinguished by peculiarities of dialect, habits, dress, and forms of worship ; and notwithstanding they unanimously consider their ancient legislators as inspired writers, collectively revealing human duties, nevertheless there exist manifest discrepancies among them in the received precepts of civil law.

2. When we examine the language spoken in Bengal, we find it widely different from that of any part of the western provinces, (though both derived from the same origin ;) so that the inhabitants of the upper country require long residence to understand the dialect of Bengal ; and although numbers of the natives of the upper provinces, residing in Bengal, in various occupations, have seemingly familiarized themselves to the Bengalees, yet the former are imperfectly understood, and distantly associated with by the latter. The language of Tellingana and other provinces of the Dukhun not being of Sunskrit origin, is still more strikingly different from the language of Bengal and the dialects of the upper provinces. The variety observable in their respective habits, and forms of dress and of worship, is by no means less striking than that of their respective languages, as must be sufficiently apparent in ordinary intercourse with these people.

3. As to the rules of civil law, similar differences have always existed. The *Dayubhagu*, a work by Jeemootvahun, treating of inheritance, has been regarded by the natives of Bengal as of authority paramount to the rest of the digests of the sacred authorities : while the *Mitakshura*, by Vignaneshwur, is upheld, in like manner, throughout the upper provinces, and a great part of the Dukhun. The natives of Bengal and those of the upper provinces believe alike in the sacred and authoritative character of the writings of Munoo, and of the other legislating saints : but the former receive those precepts according to the interpretation given them by Jeemootvahun, while the latter rely on the explanation of them by Vignaneshwur. The more modern author, Jeemootvahun, has often found occasion to differ from the other in interpreting sacred passages according to his own views, most frequently supported by sound reasoning ; and there have been thus created everlasting dissensions among their respective adherents, particularly with regard to the law of inheritance \*

4. An European reader will not be surprised at the differences I allude to, when he observes the discrepancies existing between the Greek, Armenian, Catholic, Protestant, and Baptist churches, who, though they all appeal to the same authority, materially differ from each other in many practical points, owing to the different interpretations given to passages of the Bible by the commentators they respectively follow.

5. For further elucidation I here quote a few remarks from the preface to the translation of the *Dayubhagu*, and of a part of the *Mitakshura*, by Mr. Colebrooke, well known in the literary world, which are as follows. "It (the present volume) comprehends the celebrated treatise of Jeemootvahun on succession, which is constantly cited by the lawyers of *Bengal*, under the emphatic title of *Dayubhagu*, or 'inheritance' ;

\* Of eighteen Treatises on various branches of Hindoo Law, written by Jeemootvahun, that on Inheritance alone is now generally to be met with.

and an extract from the still more celebrated Mitakshura, comprising so much of this work as relates to inheritance. The range of its authority and influence is far more extensive than that of Jeemootvahun's treatise, for it is received in all the schools of Hindoo law, from Benares to the Southern extremity of the peninsulah of India, as the chief groundwork of the doctrines which they follow, and as an authority from which they rarely dissent." (p. 4.) "The Bengal school alone, having taken for its guide Jeemootvahun's treatise, which is, on almost every disputed point, opposite in doctrine to the Mitakshura, has no deference for its authority." (p. 4.) "But (between the Dayubhagu and the abridgments of its doctrines) the preference appeared to be decidedly due to the treatise of Jeemootvahun himself, as well because he was the founder of this school, being the author of the doctrine which it has adopted, as because the subjects which he discusses, are treated by him with eminent ability and great precision." (p. 5.) The following is a saying current among the learned of Bengal, confirming the opinion offered by Mr. Colebrooke :

व्यवस्था द्विविधा प्रीक्षा दायभागसमाप्ता ।

दायभागविरुद्धा या सता न दुष्यन्मता ॥

"Opinions are said to be of two kinds, one founded on the authority of the Dayubhagu, and the other opposed to it ; (but) what is opposed to the Dayubhagu is not approved of by the learned."

6. From a regard for the usages of the country, the practice of the British courts in Bengal, as far as relates to the law of inheritance, has been hitherto consistent with the principles laid down in the Dayubhagu, and judgments have accordingly been given on its authority in many most important cases, in which it differs materially from the Mitakshura. I notice a few important cases of frequent occurrence, which have been fully discussed, and invariably decided by the judicial tribunals in Bengal, in conformity with the doctrines of Jeemootvahun.

*First.* If a member of an undivided family dies, leaving no male issue, his widow shall not be entitled to her husband's share, according to the Mitakshura: but, according to the Dayubhagu, she shall inherit such undivided portion.\*

*Second.* A childless widow, inheriting the property of her deceased husband, is authorized to dispose of it, according to the Mitakshura: but according to the Dayubhagu, she is not entitled to sell or give it away.†

*Third.* If a man dies, leaving one daughter having issue, and another without issue, the latter shall inherit the property‡

\* Mitakshura, Ch. II. Sec. i. Article 39. "Therefore it is a settled rule, that a wedded wife, being chaste, takes the whole state of a man, who, being separated from his coheirs, and not subsequently reunited with them, dies leaving no male issue."

Dayubhagu, Ch. XI. Sec. i. Art. 43. "But, on failure of heirs down to the son's grandson, the wife, being inferior in pretensions to sons and the rest, because she performs acts spiritually beneficial to her husband from the date of her widowhood, [and not, like them, from the moment of their birth,] succeeds to the estate in their default."

Ditto ditto, Art. 19. "Some reconcile the contradiction, by saying, that the preferable right of the brother supposes him either to be not separated or to be reunited; and the widow's right of succession is relative to the estate of one who was separated from his coheirs, and not reunited with them. (Art. 20.) That is contrary to a passage of Vrihusputi."

† Mitakshura, Ch. II. Sec. xi. Art. 2. "That, which was given by the father, by the mother, by the husband, or by a brother; and that, which was presented [to the bride] by the maternal uncles and the rest [as paternal uncles, maternal aunts, &c.] at the time of the wedding, before the nuptial fire; and a gift on a second marriage, or gratuity on account of supersession, as will be subsequently explained, ('To a woman whose husband marries a second wife, let him give an equal sum as a compensation for the supersession.) And also property which she may have acquired by inheritance, purchase, partition, seizure, or finding, are denominated by Munoo, and the rest, woman's property."

Dayubhagu, Ch. XI. Sec. i. Art. 56. "But the wife must only enjoy her husband's estate after his demise. She is not entitled to make a gift, mortgage, or sale of it."

‡ Mitakshura, Ch. II. Sec. ii. Art. 4. "If the competition be between an unprovided and an enriched daughter, the unprovided one inherits; but,

left by her father, according to the Mitakshura ; while the former shall receive it, according to the Dyaubhagu.

*Fourth.* If a man dies without issue or brothers, leaving a sister's son and a paternal uncle, the latter is entitled to the property, according to the Mitakshura ; and the former, according to the Dayubhagu.\*

*Fifth.* A man, having a share of undivided real property, is not authorized to make a sale or gift of it without the consent of the rest of his partners, according to the Mitakshura ; but according to the Dayubhagu, he can dispose of it at his free will.†

on failure of such, the enriched one succeeds," &c. Ch. II. Sec. xi. Art. 13. "Unprovided are such as are destitute of wealth or without issue." Hence a provided or enriched one, is such as has riches or issue.

Dayubhagu, Ch. XI. Sec. ii. Art. 3. "Therefore, the doctrine should be respected, which Dicshitu maintains, namely, that a daughter who is *mother of male issue*, or who is *likely to become so*, is *competent to inherit*, not one, who is a widow, or is barren, or fails in bearing male issue, or bearing none but daughters, or from some other cause."

\* Mitakshura, Ch. II. Sec. v. (beginning with the phrase, "If there be not even brother's sons," &c.) Art. 4. "Here, on failure of the father's descendants [including father's sons and grandsons], the heirs are successively the paternal grandmother, the paternal grandfather, *the uncles* and their sons."

Dayubhagu, Ch. XI. Sec. vi. Art. 8. "But, on failure of heirs of the father down to the great-grandson, it must be understood, that the succession devolves on *the father's daughter's son*, [in preference to the uncle.]"

† Mitakshura, Ch. I. Sec. i. Art. 30. "The following passage, '*separated kinsmen*, as those who are unseparated, are equal in respect of immoveables, for one has not power over the whole, to make a gift, sale or mortgage,' must be thus interpreted : among *unseparated kinsmen*, the consent of all is indispensably requisite, because no one is fully empowered to make an alienation, since the estate is in common ; but, among separated kindred, the consent of all tends to the facility of the transaction, by obviating any future doubt, whether they be separate or united : it is not required on account of any want of sufficient power in the single owner, and a transaction is consequently valid even without the consent of separated kinsmen."

Dayubhagu, Ch. II. Sec. xxvii. "For here also [in the very instance



*Sixth.* A man in possession of ancestral real property, though not under any tenure limiting it to the successive generations of his family, is not authorized to dispose of it, by sale or gift, without the consent of his sons and grandsons, according to the Mitakshura ; while, according to the Dayubhagu, he has the power to alienate the property at his free will.\*

7. Numerous precedents in the decisions of the civil courts in Bengal, and confirmations on appeal by the King in council, clearly shew that the exposition of the law by the author of the

of land held in common] *as in the case of other goods*, there *equally* exists a property consisting in the *power of disposal at pleasure*."

\* Mitakshura, Ch. I. sec. i. Art. 27. "Therefore, it is a settled point, that property, in the paternal or ancestral estate, is, by birth, (although) the father have independent power in the disposal of effects other than immoveables, for indispensable acts of duty, and for purposes prescribed by texts of law, as gifts through affection, support of the family, relief from distress, and so forth : but he is subject to the control of his sons and the rest, in regard to the immoveable estate, whether acquired by himself or *inherited from his father or other predecessor* ; since it is ordained, 'Though immoveables or bipeds have been acquired by a man himself, a gift or sale of them should not be made without convening all the sons. They who are born, and they who are yet unbegotten, and they who are still in the womb, require the means of support : no gift or sale should therefore be made.'

Ditto, Ch. I. Sec. v. Art. 10. "Consequently, the difference is this ; although he have a right by birth in his father's and in his grandfather's property, still, since he is dependent on his father, in regard to the paternal estate, and since the father has a predominant interest, as it was acquired by himself, the son must acquiesce in the father's disposal of his own acquired property ; but, since *both have indiscriminately a right in the grandfather's estate*, the son has a power of interdiction [if the father be dissipating the property.]"

Dyaubhagu, Ch. II. Sec. xxviii. "But the texts of Vyas, exhibiting a prohibition, are intended to show a moral offence, since the family is distressed by sale, gift, or other transfer, which argues a disposition in the person to make an ill use of his power as owner. *They are not meant to invalidate the sale or other transfer.*" Ditto, Sec. xxvi, and Sec. xlv.

Dayubhagu, as to the last mentioned point, so far from being regarded as a dead letter, has been equally, as in other points, recognized and adopted by the judicial authorities both here and in England. The consequence has been, that in the transfer of immoveable property the natives of Bengal have hitherto firmly relied on those judicial decisions as confirming the ancient usages of the country, and that large sums of money have consequently been laid out in purchases of land without reference to any distinction between acquired and ancestral property.

8. Opinions have been advanced for some time past, in opposition to the rule laid down in the Dayubhagu, authorizing a father to make a sale or gift of ancestral property, without the consent of his sons and grandsons. But these adverse notions created little or no alarm ; since, however individual opinions may run, the general principles followed by every Government are entirely at variance with the practice of groundlessly abrogating, by arbitrary decision, such civil laws of a conquered country as have been clearly and imperatively set forth in a most authoritative code, long adhered to by the natives, and repeatedly confirmed, for upwards of half a century, by the judicial officers of the conquerors. But the people are now struck with a mingled feeling of surprize and alarm, on being given to understand that the Supreme Law Authority in this country, though not without dissent on the Bench, is resolved to introduce new maxims into the law of inheritance hitherto in force in the province of Bengal ; and has, accordingly, in conformity with the doctrines found in the Mitakshura, declared every disposition by a father of his ancestral real property, without the sanction of his sons and grandsons, to be null and void.\*

\* During the early part of this century, the law regarding the power of alienation of Hindus over ancestral property, under the Bengal School, was much unsettled. In the reported cases from 1792 to 1816 we find that the Courts favoured the absolute power of alienation by the father. In 1816, however, the law was unsettled again by the case of *Bhowanee Churn vs. the Heirs of Ram Kant* which practically over-ruled all previous rulings and declared that the father's power was limited. In 1829 and 1830 the then Chief Justice of the

9. We are at a loss how to reconcile the introduction of this arbitrary change in the law of inheritance with the principles of justice, with reason, or with regard for the future prosperity of the country :—it appears inconsistent with the principles of justice ; because a judge, although he is obliged to consult his own understanding, in interpreting the law in many dubious cases submitted to his decision, yet is required to observe strict adherence to the established law, where its language is clear. In every country, rules determining the rights of succession to, and alienation of property, first originated either in the conventional choice of the people, or in the discretion of the highest authority, secular or spiritual ; and those rules have been subsequently established by the common usages of the country, and confirmed by judicial proceedings. The principles of the law as it exists in Bengal having been for ages familiar to the people, and alienations of landed property by sale, gift, mortgage, or succession having been for centuries conducted in reliance on the legality and perpetuity of the system, a sudden change in the most essential part of those rules cannot but be severely felt by the community at large ; and alienations being thus subjected to legal contests, the courts will be filled with suitors, and ruin must triumph over the welfare of a vast proportion of those who have their chief interest in landed property.

10. Mr. Colebrooke justly observes, in his Preface to the translation of the Dayabhagu, that “The rules of succession

Supreme Court, Sir Charles Edward Grey, repeatedly expressed his opinion against the father's power in several cases, especially in the case of *Unnodapersad* and *Tarapersad Banerjee*. In 1831, however, the law was settled by the case of *Juggomohun Roy vs. Sreemuttee Nemoo Dassee*, when the Chief Justice, Sir Charles E. Grey, referred the matter to the Judges of the Sudder Dewany Adawlut who, after mature consideration, declared that a Hindu father had absolute power over ancestral property. Later on, the Privy Council declared the law in the case of *Nagabuchnia Ummal vs. Gopoo Nadaraya Chetty*, in the following terms : “ Throughout Bengal a man who is the absolute owner of property may now dispose of it by will as he pleases whether it be ancestral or not.” Thus the law was settled once for all. It was the unsettled state of the law on account of Bhowanee Churn's case and the expressed opinion of Sir Charles Edward Grey, mentioned above, that called forth the present treatise from Ram Mohun Roy, and we think it helped a great deal in settling the law.

—ED.

to property, being in their nature arbitrary, are in all systems of law merely conventional. Admitting even that the succession of the offspring to the parent is so obvious as almost to present a natural and universal law, yet this very first rule is so variously modified by the usages of different nations, that its application at least must be acknowledged to be founded on consent rather than on reasoning. In the laws of one people the rights of primogeniture are established ; in those of another the equal succession of all the male offspring prevails ; while the rest allow the participation of the female with the male issue, some in equal, other in unequal proportions. Succession by right of representation, and the claim of descendants to inherit in the order of proximity, have been respectively established in various nations, according to the degree of favour with which they have viewed those opposite pretensions. Proceeding from lineal to collateral succession, the diversity of laws prevailing among different nations, is yet greater, and still more forcibly argues the arbitrariness of the rules." (page 1.)

11. We are at a loss how to reconcile this arbitrary change with reason ; because, any being capable of reasoning would not, I think, countenance the investiture, in one person, of the power of legislation with the office of judge. In every civilized country, rules and codes are found proceeding from one authority, and their execution left to another. Experience shews that unchecked power often leads the best men wrong, and produces general mischief.

12. We are unable to reconcile this arbitrary change with regard for the future prosperity of the country ; because the law now proposed, preventing a father from the disposal of ancestral property, without the consent of his son and grandson, would immediately, as I observed before, subject all past transfers of land to legal contest, and would at once render this large and fertile province a scene of confusion and misery. Besides, Bengal has been always remarkable for her riches, insomuch as to have been styled by her Mohummudan conquerors "Junnutoolbelad," or

paradise of regions ; during the British occupation of India especially, she has been manifoldly prosperous. Any one possessed of landed property, whether self-acquired or ancestral, has been able, under the long established law of the land, to procure easily, on the credit of that property, loans of money to lay out on the improvement of his estate, in trade or in manufactures, whereby he enriches himself and his family and benefits the country. Were the change which it is threatened to introduce into the law of inheritance to be sanctioned, and the privilege of disposing of ancestral property (though not entailed) without the consent of heirs be denied to landholders, they being incapacitated from a free disposal of the property in their actual possession, would naturally lose the credit they at present enjoy, and be compelled to confine their concerns to the extent of their actual savings from their income ; the consequence would be, that a great majority of them would unavoidably curtail their respective establishments, much more their luxuries, a circumstance which would virtually impede the progress of foreign and domestic commerce. Is there any good policy in reducing the natives of Bengal to that degree of poverty which has fallen upon a great part of the upper provinces, owing, in some measure, to the wretched restrictions laid down in the Mitakshura, their standard law of inheritance ? Do Britons experience any inconvenience or disadvantage owing to the differences of legal institutions between England and Scotland, or between one county of England and another ? What would Englishmen say, were the Court of King's Bench to adopt the law of Scotland, as the foundation of their decisions regarding legitimacy, or of Kent, in questions of inheritance ? Every liberal politician will, I think, coincide with me, when I say, that in proportion as a dependent kingdom approximates to her guardian country in manners, in statutes, in religion, and in social and domestic usages, their reciprocal relation flourishes, and their mutual affection increases.

13. It is said that the change proposed has forced itself on the notice of the Bench upon the following premises :—

1st. Certain writings, such as the institutes of Munoo and of others, esteemed as sacred by Hindoos, are the foundation of their law of inheritance. 2ndly. That Jeemootvahun, the author of the Dayubhagu, is but a commentator on those writings. 3rdly. That from these circumstances, such part of the commentary by Jeemootvahun as gives validity to a sale or gift by a father of his ancestral immoveables, without the consent of his son and grandson, being obviously at variance with sacred precepts found on the same subject, should be rejected, and all sales or gifts of the kind be annulled.

14. I agree in the first assertion, that certain writings received by Hindoos as sacred, are the origin of the Hindoo law of inheritance, but with this modification, that the writings supposed sacred are only, when consistent with sound reasoning, considered as imperative, as Munoo plainly declares: "He alone comprehends the system of duties, religious and civil, who can reason, by rules of logic, agreeably to the Ved, on the general heads of that system as revealed by the holy sages." Ch. xii. v. 106. Vrihusputi. "Let no one found conclusions on the mere words of Shastrus: from investigations without reason, religious virtue is lost."\* As to the second position, I first beg to ask, whether or not it be meant by Jeemootvahun's being styled a *commentator* that he wrote commentaries upon all or any of those sacred institutes. The fact is, that no one of those sacred institutes bears his comment. Should it be meant that the author of the Dayubhagu was so far a commentator, that he collected passages from different sacred institutes, touching every particular subject, and examining their purport separately and collectively, and weighing the sense deducible from the context, has offered that opinion on the subject which appeared to agree best with the series of passages cited collectively, and that when he has found one passage apparently at variance with another,

\* केवलं शास्त्रमाश्रित्य न कर्तव्योऽर्थनिर्णयः ।

युक्तिहीनविचारैश्च धर्मद्वन्द्वानि प्रजायते ॥ उच्यते ॥

he has laid stress upon that which seemed the more reasonable and more conformable to the general tenor, giving the other an interpretation of a subordinate nature, I readily concur in giving him the title of a commentator, though the word expounder would be more applicable. By way of illustration, I give here an instance of what I have advanced, that the reader may readily determine the sense in which the author of the Dayubhagu should be considered as a commentator.

15. In laying down rules "on succession to the estate of one who leaves no male issue," this author first quotes (Ch. xi. page 158,) the following text of Vrihusputi: "In scripture and in the code of law, as well as in popular practice, a wife is declared by the wise to be half the body of her husband, equally sharing the fruit of pure and impure acts. Of him, whose wife is not deceased, half the body survives: how then should another take his property, while half his person is alive? Let the wife of a deceased man, who left no male issue, take his share, notwithstanding kinsmen, a father, a mother, or uterine brother, be present," &c. &c. He next cites the text of Yagnuvulkyu, (p. 160,) as follows:—"The wife and the daughters, also both parents, brothers likewise, and their sons, gentiles, cognates, a pupil, and a fellow student; on failure of the first among these, the next in order is indeed heir to the estate of one, who departed for heaven leaving no male issue. This rule extends to all persons and classes." The author then quotes a text from the Institutes of Vishnool, ordaining that "the wealth of him who leaves no male issue, goes to his wife; on failure of her, it devolves on daughters; if there be none, it belongs to the mother," &c. &c. Having thus collected a series of passages from the Institutes of Vrihusputi, Yagnuvulkyu, and Vishnool, and examined and weighed the sense deducible from the context, the author offers his opinion on the subject. "By this text, [by the seven texts of Vrihusputi, and by the text of Yagnuvulkyu,] relating to the order of succession, the right of the widow, to succeed in the first instance, is declared" "Therefore, the

widow's right must be affirmed to extend to the whole estate." (p. 161.)

16. The same author afterwards notices, in page 163, several texts of a seemingly contrary nature, but to which he does not hesitate to give a reconciling interpretation, without retracting or modifying his own decision. He quotes Sunkhu and Likhitu, Peitheenusi, and Yum, as declaring, "The wealth of a man who departs for heaven, leaving no male issue, goes to his brothers. If there be none, his father and mother take it; or his eldest wife, or a kinsman, a pupil, or a fellow student." Pursuing a train of long and able discussion, the author ventures to declare the subordinacy of the latter passage to the former, as the conclusion best supported by reason, and most conformable to the general tenor of the law. He begins saying, (p. 169,) "From the text of Vishnoo and the rest, (Yagnuvulkyu and Vrihushputi,) it clearly appears, that the succession devolves on the widow, by failure of sons and other [male] descendants, and this is reasonable; for the estate of the deceased should go first to the son, grandson, and great grandson." He adds, in page 170, pointing out the ground on which the priority of a son's claim is founded, a ground which is applicable to the widow's case also, intimating the superiority of a widow's claim to that of a brother, a father, &c. "So Munoo declares the right of inheritance to be founded on benefits conferred. 'By the eldest son, as soon as born, a man becomes the father of male issue, and is *exonerated from debt to his ancestor; such a son, therefore, is entitled to take the heritage.*'" The author next shews, that as the benefits conferred by a widow on her deceased husband, by observing a life of austerity, are inferior only to those procured to him by a son, grandson, and great grandson, her right to succession should be next to theirs in point of order, (page 173.) "But, on failure of heirs down to the son's grandson, the wife, being inferior in pretensions to sons and the rest, because she performs acts spiritually beneficial to her husband from the date of her widowhood, (and not, like them, from the



moment of their birth,) succeeds to the estate in their default." He thus concludes: "Hence [since the wife's right of succession is founded on reason] the construction in the text of Sunkhu, &c. must be arranged by connexion of remote terms, in this manner: 'The wealth of a man, who departs for heaven, leaving no male issue, let his eldest [that is, his most excellent] wife take; or, in her default, let the parents take it: on failure of them, it goes to the brothers.' The terms 'if there be none,' [that is, if there be no wife,] which occur in the middle of the text, are connected both with the preceding sentence 'it goes to his brothers,' and with the subsequent one, 'his father and mother take it.' For the text agrees with passages of Vishnool and Yagnuvulkyu, [which declare the wife's right,] and the reasonableness of this has been already shewn." (p. 174.)

17. It is however evident that the author of the Dayubhagun gives here an apparent preference to the authority of one party of the saints over that of the other, though both have equal claims upon his reverence. But admitting that a Hindool author, an expounder of their law, sin against some of the sacred writers, by withholding a blind submission to their authority, and likewise that the natives of the country have for ages adhered to the rules he has laid down, considering them reasonable, and calculated to promote their social interest, though seemingly at variance with some of the sacred authors; it is those holy personages alone that have a right to avenge themselves upon such expounder and his followers; but no individual of mere secular authority, however high, can, I think, justly assume to himself the office of vindicating the sacred fathers, and punishing spiritual insubordination, by introducing into the existing law an overwhelming change in the attempt to restore obedience.

18. In this apparent heterodoxy, I may observe, Jeemootvahun does not stand single. The author of the Mitakshura also has, in following, very properly, the established privilege of an expounder, reconciled to reason, by a construction of his own,

such sacred texts as appeared to him, when taken literally, inconsistent with justice or good sense. Of this, numerous instances might easily be adduced, but the principle is so invariably adopted by this class of writers, that the following may suffice for examples. The author of the Mitakshura first quotes (Ch. I. Sec. iii. Art. 3 and 4, p. 263—265) the three following texts of Munoo, allotting the best portion of the heritage to the eldest brother at the time of partition. “The portion deducted for the eldest is the twentieth part of the heritage, with the best of all the chattles; for the middlemost, half of that; for the youngest, a quarter of it.” “If a deduction be thus made, let equal shares of the residue be allotted; but if there be no deduction, the shares must be distributed in this manner; let the eldest have a double share, and the next born a share and a half, and the younger sons each a share: thus is the law settled.”\* The author of the Mitakshura then offers his opinion in direct opposition to Munoo, saying, “The author himself † has sanctioned an unequal distribution when a division is made during the father’s life time. ‘Let him either dismiss the eldest with the best share, &c.’ ‡ Hence an unequal partition is admissible in every period. How then is a restriction introduced, requiring that sons should divide only equal shares? (Art 4.) The question is thus answered: True, this unequal partition is found in the sacred ordinances; but *it must not be practised*, because it is abhorred by the world; since that is forbidden by the maxim, ‘Practise not that which is legal, but is abhorred by the world, [for] it secures not celestial bliss;’ § as the practice [of offering bulls] is shunned, on account of popular prejudice, notwithstanding the injunction, ‘Offer to a venerable priest a

\* Munoo, Ch. ix. v. 112, v. 116 and 117.

† Yagnuvulkyu.

‡ Yagnuvulkyu.

§ A passage of Yagnuvulkyu, according to the quotation of Mitru Mishru in the Veermitrodayu, but ascribed to Munoo in Balumbhuttu’s commentary. it has not, however, been found either in Munoo’s or Yagnuvulkyu’s Institutes.”—(Mr. Colebrooke.)

a bull or a large goat ;' and as the slaying of a cow is for the same reason disused, notwithstanding the precept, 'Slay a barren cow as a victim consecrated to Mitru and Vuroonu.' " \* By adverting to the above exposition of the law, we find that the objection of heterodoxy, if urged against the authority of the Dayubhagu, is equally applicable to that of the Mitakshura in its full extent, and may be thus established. 1st. Certain writings, such as the institutes of Munoo and of others, esteemed sacred by Hindoos, are the foundation of the law of inheritance. 2ndly. Vignaneshwur (author of the Mitakshura) is but a commentator on those writings. 3rdly. Therefore, such part of the commentatry of Vignaneshwur as indiscriminately entitles all brothers to an equal share, being obviously at variance with the precepts of Munoo found on the subject, should be rejected, and the best and the largest portion of the heritage be allotted to the eldest brother, by judicial authorities ; according to the letter of the sacred text. Again, take the Mitakshura, Ch. I. Sec. 1. Art. 30, p. 257. "The following passage, 'Separated kinsmen, as those who are unseparated, are equal in respect of immoveables, for one has not power over the whole to make a gift, sale, or mortgage ;' must be thus interpreted : 'Among unseparated kinsmen, the consent of all is indispensably requisite, because no one is fully empowered to make an alienation, since the estate is in common ;' but among separated kindred, the consent of all tends to the facility of the transaction, by obviating any future doubt, whether they be separate or united ; it is not required, on account of any want of sufficient power in the single owner, and *the transaction is consequently valid even without the consent of separated kinsmen.*" Ditto, Ch. I. Sec. 11. Art. 28, page 316. " 'The legitimate son is the sole heir of his father's estate ; but, for the sake of innocence, he should give a maintenance to the rest.' This text of Munoo must be considered as applicable to a case, where the adopted

\* Passage of the Ved.

sons (namely, the son given and the rest) are disobedient to the legitimate son and devoid of good qualities."

19. I now proceed to the consideration of the last point, as the ground on which the change proposed is alleged to be founded. To judge of its validity we should ascertain whether the interpretations given by the author of the Dayubhagu, to the sacred texts, touching the subject of free disposal by a father of his ancestral property, are obviously at variance with those very texts, or if they are conformable to sound reason and the general purport of the passages cited collectively on the same subject. With this view I shall here repeat, methodically, the series of passages quoted by the author of the Dayubhagu, relating to the above point, as well as his interpretation and elucidation of the same.

20. To shew the independent and exclusive right of a father in the property he possesses, (of course with the exception of estates entailed) the author first quotes the following text of Munoo: "After the (death of the) father and the mother, the brethren, being assembled, must divide equally the paternal estate: *For they have not power over it, while their parents live.*" Ch. I. Sec. 14, (p. 8). He next quotes Devulu: "When the father is deceased, let the sons divide the father's wealth; for *sons have not ownership while the father is alive* and free from defect." Ch. I. Sec. 18, (p. 9.) After a long train of discussion, the author appeals to the above texts as the foundation of the law he has expounded, by saying, "Hence the text of Munoo, and the rest (as Devulu) must be taken as shewing, that sons have not a right of ownership in the wealth of the living parents, but in the estates of both when deceased." Ch. I. Sec. 30, (p. 13 and 14.)

21. To illustrate the position that the father is the sole and independent owner of the property in his possession, whether self-acquired or ancestral, the author thus proceeds: "A division of it does not take place without the father's choice; since Munoo, Narudu, Gotumu, Bodhayunu, Sunkhu, and Likhitu, and others

(in the following passages, 'they have not power over it ;' 'they have not ownership while their father is alive and free from defect ;' 'while he lives if he desire partition ;' 'partition of heritage by consent of the father ;' 'partition of the estate being authorized while the father is living,' &c.) declare without restriction, that sons *have not a right to any part* of the estate while the father is living, and that *partition awaits his choice* : for these texts, declaratory of *a want of power and requiring the father's consent*, must relate also to property *ancestral*, since the same authors *have not separately propounded a distinct period for the division of an estate inherited from an ancestor.*" Ch. II. Sec. 8, (p. 25.) The circumstance of the partition of estates being entirely dependent on the will of the father, and the son's being precluded from demanding partition while the father is alive, sufficiently prove that they have not any right in the estate during his life time ; or else the sons, as having property in the estate jointly with the father, would have been permitted to demand partition. Does not common sense abhor the system of a son's being empowered to demand a division between himself and his father of the hereditary estate ? Would not the birth of a son with this power, be considered in the light of a curse rather than a blessing, as subjecting a father to the danger of having his peaceable possession of the property inherited from his own father or other ancestor disturbed ?

22. The author afterwards reasons on those passages that are of seemingly contrary authority ; first quoting the text of Yagnuvulkyu, as follows. "The ownership of father and son is the same in land which was acquired by his father, or in a corrody, or in chattels." He adopts the explanation given to this text by the most learned, the ancient Oodyot, affirming that it "properly signifies, as rightly explained by the learned Oodyot, that, when one of two brothers, whose father is living, and who have not received allotments, dies leaving a son, and the other survives, and the father afterwards deceases, the text, declaratory of similar ownership, is intended to obviate the conclusion, that the

surviving son alone obtains his estate, because he is next of kin. As the father has ownership in the grandfather's estate ; so have his sons, if he be dead." Ch. II. Sec. 9, (p. 25.) The author then points out, that such interpretation given to the text, as declares the claims of a grandson upon the estate of his grandfather equal to those of his father, while the father is living, is palpably objectionable ; for, "if sons had ownership during the life of their father, in their grandfather's estate, then should a division be made between two brothers, one of whom has male issue, and the other has none, the children of that one would participate, since (according to the opposite opinion) they have equally ownership." Ch. II. Sec. 11, (p. 26.) He next quotes Vishnoo : "When a father separates his sons from himself, his will regulates the division of his own acquired wealth. But in the estate inherited from the grandfather, the ownership of father and son is equal." Upon this text the author of the Dayubbagu justly remarks in the following terms. "This is very clear ; *when* the father separates his sons from himself, he may, by his own choice, give them greater or less allotments, if the wealth were acquired by himself ; but not so, if it were property inherited from the grandfather, because they have an equal right to it. The father has not in such case an unlimited discretion." Ch. II. Sec. 17, (p. 27.) That is, *a father dividing his property among his sons, to separate them from himself during life time*, is not authorised to give them of his own caprice, greater or less allotments of his ancestral estate, as the phrase in the above text of Vishnoo, "when a father separates his sons from himself," &c. prohibits the free disposal by a father of his ancestral property *only* on the occasion of allotments among his sons to allow them separate establishments. The author now conclusively states, that "Hence (since the text becomes pertinent, by taking it in the sense above stated, or because there is ownership restricted by law in respect of shares, and not an unlimited discretion,) both opinions, that the mention of like ownership provides for an equal division between father and son

in the case of property ancestral, and that it establishes the son's right to require partition, ought to be rejected." Ch. II. Sec. 18, (p. 27.)

23. The author, thirdly, quotes Yagnuvulkyu. "The father is master of the gems, pearls and corals, and of all (other moveable property,) but neither the father, or the grandfather, is so of the *whole* immoveable estate;" and points out the sense conveyed by the term "the whole" found in the above passage, saying, "Since here also it is said the 'whole,' this prohibition forbids the gift or other alienation of the *whole*, because (immoveables and similar possessions are) means of supporting the family." (Ch. II. Sec. 23.) That is, the father is likewise master of the ancestral estate, though not of the whole of it, implies that a father may freely dispose of a part of his ancestral estate, even without committing a moral offence. This passage of Yagnuvulkyu, cited by the opposite party, who deny to the father the power of free disposal of ancestral estates, runs, in a great measure, against them, since it disapproves a sale or gift by a father only of the whole of his ancestral landed property, while his sons are living, withholding their consent.

24. To justify the disposal by a father, under particular circumstances, even of the whole ancestral estate, without incurring a moral offence, the author adds, (Ch. II. Sec. 26.) "But if the family cannot be supported without selling the whole immoveable and other property, even the *whole* may be sold or otherwise disposed of, as appears from the obvious sense of the passage, and because it is directed, that 'a man should *by all means* preserve himself;" and because a sacred writer positively enjoins the maintenance of one's family by all means possible, and prefers it to every other duty. "His aged mother and father, dutiful wife, and son under age, should be maintained even by committing a hundred unworthy acts.\* Thus directed Munoo." Vide Mitakshura, Ch. II. Munoo positively says: "A mother, a

\* दृढोच मातापितरौ साध्वो भार्या सुतः शिष्यः ।

" अथकार्यं भूतं कृत्वा भर्तव्या मनुस्मृत्योः ॥

father, a wife, and a son, shall not be forsaken ; he, who forsakes either of them, unless guilty of a deadly sin, shall pay six hundred panas as a fine to the King." (Ch. VIII. v. 389.)

25. He, fourthly, quotes two extraordinary texts of Vyasú, as prohibiting the disposal, by a single parcener, of his share in the immoveables, under the notion that each parcener has his property in the whole estate jointly possessed. These texts are as follow : " A single parcener may not, without consent of the rest, make a sale or gift of the whole immoveable estate, nor of what is common to the family." " Separated kinsmen, as those who are unseparated, are equal in respect of immoveables : for one has not power over the whole, to give, mortgage, or sell it." Upon which the author of the Dayubhagu remarks, (Ch. II. Sec. 27 :) " It should not be alleged that by the texts of Vyasú one person has not power to make a sale, or other transfer of such property. For here also (in the very instance of land held in common) as in the case of other goods, there equally exists a property consisting in the power of disposal at pleasure." That is, a partner has, in common with the rest, an undisputed property existing either in the whole of the moveables and immoveables, or in an undivided portion of them ; he, therefore, should not be, or cannot be, prevented from executing, at his pleasure, a transfer of his right to another by a sale, gift, or mortgage of it.

26. In reply to the question, what might be the consequence of disregard to the prohibition conveyed by the above texts of Vyasú ? the author says : " But the texts of Vyasú exhibiting a prohibition, are intended to shew a moral offence ; since the family is distressed by a sale, gift, or other transfer, which argues a disposition in the person to make an ill use of his power as owner. They are not meant to invalidate the sale or other transfer." (Ch. II. Sec. 28.) A partner is as completely a legal owner of his own share, (either divided or undivided) as a proprietor of an entire estate ; and consequently a sale or gift executed by the former, of his own share,



should, with reason, be considered equally valid, as a contract by the latter for his sole estate. Hence prohibition of such transfer being clearly opposed to common sense and ordinary usage, should be understood as only forbidding a dereliction of moral duty, committed by those who infringe it, and not as invalidating the transfer.

27. In adopting this mode of exposition of the law, the author of the *Dayubhagu* has pursued the course frequently inculcated by Munoo and others ; a few instances of which I beg to bring briefly to the consideration of the reader, for the full justification of this author. Munoo, the first of all Hindoo legislators, prohibits donation to an unworthy Brahmun in the following terms—"Let no man, apprised of this law, present even water to a priest, who acts like a cat, nor to him who acts like a bittern, nor to him who is unlearned in the Ved." (Ch. IV. v. 192.) Let us suppose that in disregard to this prohibition a gift has been actually made to one of those priests ; a question then naturally arises, whether this injunction of Munoo's invalidates the gift, or whether such infringement of the law only renders the donor guilty of a moral offence. The same legislator, in continuation, thus answers : " Since property, though legally gained, if it be given to either of those three, becomes prejudicial in the next world both to the giver and receiver." (v. 193.) The same authority forbids marrying girls of certain descriptions, saying, "Let him not marry a girl with reddish hair, nor with any deformed limb, nor one troubled with habitual sickness, nor one either with no hair or with too much, nor one immoderately talkative ; nor one with inflamed eyes." (Ch. III. v. 8.) Although this law has been very frequently disregarded, yet no voidance of such a marriage, where the ceremony has been actually and regularly performed, has ever taken place ; it being understood that the above prohibition, not being supported by sound reason, only involves the bridegroom in the religious offence of disregard to a sacred precept. He again prohibits the

acceptance of a gratuity, on giving a daughter in marriage, naming every marriage of this description "Assooru," as well as declaring an Assooru marriage to be illegal; but daughters given in marriage on receiving a gratuity have been always considered as *légals* wives, though their fathers are regarded with contempt, as guilty of a deadly sin. The passages above alluded to are as follow: (Munoo :) "But even a man of the servile class *ought not to receive a gratuity* when he gives his daughter in marriage; since a father, who takes a fee *on that occasion*, tacitly *sells his daughter*." (Ch. IX. v. 98.) "When the bridegroom, having given as much wealth as he can afford to the father and paternal kinsmen and to the damsel herself, takes her voluntarily as his bride; that marriage is named Assooru." (Ch. III. v. 31.) "But in this code, three of the five last are held legal, and two illegal, the ceremonies of *Pisaches* and *Assoorus* must never be performed." (Ch. III. v. 25.)

28. The author finally quotes the following text: "Though immoveables or bipeds have been acquired by a man himself, a gift or sale of them (*should*) not (*be made*) by him, unless convening all the sons;" and he proceeds affirming, "So likewise other texts as this, must be interpreted in the same manner (as before.) For the words 'should' and 'be made' must necessarily be understood." (Ch. II. Sec. 29.) That is, there is a verb wanting in the above phrase "a gift or a sale not by him," consequently "should" or "ought" and "be made" are necessarily to be inserted, and the phrase is thus read: "A gift or sale *should not be* or *ought not to be made* by him," expressing a prohibition of the free disposal by a father even of his self-acquired immoveables. This text also, says the author, cannot be intended to imply the invalidity of a gift or sale by a lawful owner; but it shews a moral offence by breach of such a prohibition: "Since the family is distressed by a sale, gift, or other transfer, which argues a disposition in the person to make an ill use of his power as owner." Moreover, as Munoo,

Devulu, Gotumu, Boudhayunu, Sunkhu, and Likhitu, and others represent a son as having no right to the property in possession of the father, in the plainest terms, (as already quoted in para. 21) no son should be permitted to interfere with the free disposal by the father of the property he actually possesses. The author now concludes the subject with this positive decision "Therefore, since it is denied that a gift or sale should be made, the precept is infringed by making one. But the gift or transfer is not null: for a fact cannot be altered by a hundred texts." (Ch. II. Sec. 30.)

29. In illustration of this principle it may be observed, that a man legally possessed of immoveable property (whether ancestral or self-acquired) has always been held responsible and punishable as owner, for acts occurring on his estate, of a tendency hurtful to the peace of his neighbours or injurious to the community at large. He even forfeits his estate, if found guilty of treason or similar crimes, though his sons and grand sons are living who have not connived at his guilt. In case of default on his part in the discharge of revenue payable to Government: from the estate, he is subjected to the privation of that property by public sale under the authority of Government. He is, in fact, under these and many other circumstances, actually and virtually acknowledged to be the lawful and perfect owner of his estate; a sale or gift by him of his property must therefore stand valid or unquestionable. Sacred writings, although they prohibit such a sale or gift as may distress the family, by limiting their means of subsistence, cannot alter the fact, nor do they nullify what has been effectually done. I have already pointed out in the 37th paragraph the sense in which prohibitions of a similar nature should be taken, according to the authority of Munoo, which the reader is requested not to lose sight of. Mr. Colebrooke judiciously quotes (page 32) the observation made by Rughoonundun (the celebrated modern expounder of law in Bengal) on the above passage of the Dayubhagu, ("A fact cannot be altered by a hundred texts,")

which is as follows : “ If a Brahmun be slain, the precept ‘ Slay not a Brahmun ’ does not annul the murder : nor does it render the killing of a Brahmun impossible. What then ? It declares the sin.” Admitting for a moment that this sacred text (quoted in the Mitakshura also) be interpreted conformably to its apparent language and spirit, it would be equally opposed to the argument of our adversaries, who allow a father to be possessed of power over his self-acquired property ; since the text absolutely denies to the father an independent power even over his self-acquired immoveables, declaring, “ Though *immoveables* and bipeds have been *acquired by a man himself*,” &c. &c. In what a strange situation is the father placed, if such be really the law ! How thoroughly all power over his own possessions is taken away, and his credit reduced !

30. The author quotes also two passages from Narudu, as confirming the course of reasoning, which he has pursued, with regard to the independence claimable by each of all the coheirs in a joint property. The passages above alluded to are thus read : “ When there are many persons sprung from one man, who have duties apart and transactions apart, and are separate in business and character, if they be not accordant in affairs, should they give or sell their own shares, they do all that as they please ; *for they are masters of their own wealth*.” (Ch. II. Sec. 31.)

31. After I had sent my manuscript to the Press, my attention was directed to an article in the “ *Calcutta Quarterly Magazine*, No. VI. April—June, 1825,” being a Review of Sir F. W. McNaghten’s Considerations on Hindoo Law. In this essay I find an opinion offered by the writer, tending to recommend that any disposal by a father of his ancestral immoveables should be nullified, on the principle that we ought “ *to make that invalid which was considered immoral*.” (p. 225.) I am surprised that this unqualified maxim should drop from the pen of the presumed reviewer, who, as a scholar, stands very high in my estimation, and from whose extensive knowledge more correct judgment might be expected. Let us, however,

apply this principle to practice, to see how far, as a general rule, it may be safely adopted.

32. To marry an abandoned female, is an act of evil moral example : Are such unions to be therefore declared invalid, and the offspring of them rendered illegitimate ?

To permit the sale of intoxicating drugs and spirits, so injurious to health, and even sometimes destructive of life, on the payment of duties publicly levied, is an act highly irreligious and immoral : Is the taxation to be, therefore, rendered invalid and payments stopped ?

To divide spoils gained in a war commenced in ambition and carried on with cruelty, is an act immoral and irreligious : Is the partition therefore to be considered invalid, and the property to be replaced ?

To give a daughter in marriage to an unworthy man, on account of his rank or fortune, or other such consideration, is a deed of mean and immoral example : Is the union to be therefore considered invalid, and their children illegitimate ?

To destroy the life of a fellow being in a duel, is not only immoral, but is reckoned by many as murder : Is not the practice tacitly admitted to be legal, by the manner in which it is overlooked in courts of justice ?

33. There are of course acts lying on the border of immorality, or both immoral and irreligious ; and these are consequently to be considered invalid : such as the contracting of debts by way of gambling, and the execution of a deed on the Sabbath day. The question then arises, how shall we draw a line of distinction between those immoral acts that should not be considered invalid, and those that should be regarded as null in the eye of the law ? In answer to this, we must refer to the common law and the established usages of every country, as furnishing the distinctions admitted between the one class and the other. The reference suggested is, I think, the sole guide upon such questions ; and pursuant to this maxim, I may be permitted to repeat, that according to the law and usages of Bengal, though

a father may be charged with breach of religious duty, by a sale or gift of ancestral property at his own discretion, he should not be subjected to the pain of finding his act nullified ; nor the purchaser punished with forfeiture of his acquisition. However, when the author of the Review shall have succeeded in inducing British legislators to adopt his maxim, and declare that the validity of every act shall be determined by its consistence with morality, we may then listen to his suggestion, for applying the same rule to the Bengal Law of Inheritance.

34. The writer of this Review quotes (in p. 221) a passage from the Dayubhagu, (Ch. II. Sec. 76,) "Since the circumstance of the father being lord of all the wealth, is stated as a reason, and that cannot be in regard to the grandfather's estate, an unequal distribution, made by the father, is lawful only in the instance of his own acquired wealth." He then comments, saying, "Nothing can be more clear than Jeemootvahun's assertion of this doctrine." But it would have been still more clear, if the writer had cited the latter part of the sentence obviously connected with the former ; which is that, "Accordingly Vishnoo says, 'When a father separates his sons from himself, his own will regulates the division of his own acquired wealth. But in the estate inherited from the grandfather, the ownership of father and son is equal.'" That is, a father is not absolute lord of his ancestral property, (as he is of his own acquired wealth,) *when occupied in separating his sons from himself during his life.* This is evident from the explanation given by the author of the Dayubhagu himself, of the above text of Vishnoo, in Sec. 56, (Ch. II,) "The meaning of this passage is, 'In the case of his own acquired property, whatever he may choose to reserve, whether half or two shares, or three, all that is permitted to him by the law ; but not so in the case of property ancestral ;' as well as from the exposition by the same author of this very text of Vishnoo, in Sec. 17, (Ch. II,) already fully illustrated as applicable solely to the occasion of partition, (vide para. 22, p. 27.)

35. It would have been equally clear as desirable, because *conclusive*, if the writer of the article had also quoted the following passage of the Dayubhagu touching the same subject, (Ch. II. Sec. 46.) "By the reasoning thus set forth, if the elder brother have two shares of the father's estate, how should the highly venerable father being the natural parent of the brothers, and COMPETENT TO SELL, GIVE, OR ABANDON THE PROPERTY, and being the root of all connection with the *grandfather's estate*, be not entitled, in like circumstances, to a double portion of his own father's wealth?"

36. In expounding the following text of Yagnuvalkyu, "The father is master of the gems, pearls, and corals, and of all (other moveable property), but neither the father, nor the grandfather, is so of the whole immoveable estate;" the author of the Dayubhagu first observes, (Ch. II. Sec. 23,) "Since the grandfather is here mentioned, the text must relate to his effects." He then proceeds, saying, "Since here also it is said 'the whole,' the prohibition forbids the gift or other alienation of the 'whole,' " &c. ; and thus concludes the section (24 :) "For the insertion of the word 'whole' would be unmeaning (if the gift of even a small part were forbidden.)" The author of the Dayubhagu does not stop here ; but he lays down the following rule in the succeeding section already quoted, (26.) "But if the family cannot be supported without selling the *whole immoveable* and other property, even the *whole* may be sold or otherwise disposed of : as appears from the obvious sense of the passage, and because it is directed, that 'a man should by all means preserve himself.' " Here Jeemootvahun justifies, in the plainest terms, the sale and other disposal by a father of the *whole* of the estate *inherited from his own father* for the maintenance of his family or for self-preservation, without committing even a moral offence : but I regret that this simple position by Jeemootvahun should not have been adverted to by the writer of the article while reviewing the subject.

37. To his declaration, that "Nothing can be more clear

than Jeemootvahun's assertion of this doctrine," the reviewer adds the following phrase : " And the doubt cast upon it by its expounders, Rughoonundun, Shree Krishnu Turkalunkar, and Jugunnath, is wholly gratuitous. In fact, the latter is chiefly to blame for the distinction between illegal and invalid acts." It is, I think, requisite that I should notice here who these three expounders were, whom the writer charges with the invention of this doctrine ; at what periods they lived ; and how they stood and still stand in the estimation of the people of Bengal. To satisfy any one on these points, I have only to refer to the accounts given of them by Mr. Colebrooke, in his preface to the translation of the Dayubhagu. In speaking of Rughoonundun, he says, " It bears the name of Rughoonundun, the author of the Smriti-tutwu, and the greatest authority of Hindoo Law in the province of Bengal." " The Daya-tutwu, or so much of the Smriti-tutwu as relates to inheritance, is the undoubted composition of Rughoonundun ; and in deference to the greatness of the author's name, and the estimation in which his works are held among the learned Hindoos of Bengal, has been throughout diligently consulted and carefully compared with Jeemootvahun's treatise, on which it is almost exclusively founded." (p. vii.) " Now Rughoonundun's date is ascertained at about three hundred years from this time," &c. (p. xii.) Mr. Colebrooke thus introduces Shree Krishnu Turkalunkar : " The commentary of Shree Krishnu Turkalunkar on the Dayubhagu of Jeemootvahun, has been chiefly and preferably used. This is the most celebrated of the glosses on the text. Its authority has been long gaining ground in the schools of law throughout Bengal ; and it has almost banished from them the other expositions of the Dayubhagu ; being ranked in general estimation, next to the treatises of Jeemootvahun and of Rughoonundun." (p. vi.) " The commentary of Muheshwur is posterior to those of Chooramuni and Uchyoot, both of which are cited in it ; and is probably anterior to Shree Krishnu's, or at least nearly of the same date." (p. vii.) In the note at foot he



observes, "Great-grandsons of both these writers were living in 1806." Hence it may be inferred, that Shree Krishnu Turkalunkar lived above a century from this time. Mr. Colebrooke takes brief notice of Jugunnath Turkupunchanun, saying, "A very ample compilation on this subject is included in the Digest of Hindoo Law, prepared by Jugunnath, under directions of Sir William Jones, &c." (p. ii.) The last mentioned, Jugunnath, was universally acknowledged to be the first literary character of his day, and his authority has nearly as much weight as that of Rughoonundun.

38. Granting for a moment that the doctrine of free disposal by a father of his ancestral property is opposed to the authority of Jeemootvahun, but that this doctrine has been prevalent in Bengal for upwards of three centuries, in consequence of the erroneous exposition of Rughoonundun, "*the greatest authority of Hindoo law in the province of Bengal*," by Shree Krishnu Turkalunkar, the author of "*the most celebrated of the glosses of the text*," and by the most learned Jugunnath; yet it would, I presume, be generally considered as a most rash and injurious, as well as ill-advised, innovation, for any administrator of Hindoo Law of the present day to set himself up as the corrector of successive expositions, admitted to have been received and acted upon as authoritative for a period extending to upwards of three centuries back.

39. In the foregoing pages my endeavour has been to shew that the province of Bengal, having its own peculiar language; manners and ceremonies, has long enjoyed also a distinct system of law. That the author of this system has greatly improved on the expositions followed in other provinces of India, and, therefore, well merits the preference accorded to his exposition by the people of Bengal. That the discrepancies existing amongst the several interpretations of legal texts are not confined alone to the law of disposition of property by a father, but extend to other matters. That in following those expositions which best reconcile law with reason, the author of the Bengal system is

warranted by the highest sacred authority, as well as by the example of the most revered of his predecessors, the author of the Mitakshura ; and that he has been eminently successful in his attempt at so doing, more particularly by unfettering property, and declaring the principle, that the alienator of an hereditary estate is only morally responsible for his acts, so far as they are unnecessary, and tend to deprive his family of the means of support. That he is borne out in the distinction he has drawn between moral precepts, a disregard to which is sinful, leaving the act valid and legal, and absolute injunctions, the acts in violation of which are null and void. If I have succeeded in this attempt, it follows that any decision founded on a different interpretation of the law, however widely that exposition may have been adopted in other provinces, is not merely retrograding in the social institutions of the Hindoo community of Bengal, mischievous in disturbing the validity of existing titles to property, and of contracts founded on the received interpretation of the law, but a violation of the charter of justice, by which the administration of the existing law of the people in such matters was secured to the inhabitants of this country.



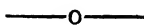
# APPENDIX.



LETTERS ON THE  
HINDOO LAW OF INHERITANCE.

This Appendix appears only in the London Edition of 1832, from which it has been reprinted.—ED.

## APPENDIX.



### No. I.

#### HINDOO LAW OF INHERITANCE.

Extract from a Letter published in the Bengal Hurkaru of the 20th September, 1830, relating to the power of a Father over Ancestral Property.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru and Chronicle.*

SIR,

WILL you do me the favour of inserting the following lines in a corner of your valuable paper, as the insertion of them will be the means of dispersing the darkness which the author of the Essay on the Rights of Hindoo Law, has thrown on the minds of those who believe the accuracy of the work in question, as well as of reviving the memory of your judicial readers on the subject of right and wrong, as expounded by the Hindoo Legislators.

At the perusal of the observations contained in the Essay, I regret to say that I found almost all of them are repugnant to the laws and customs of the country and community, for which I would venture to discuss on those points, though I am perfectly aware, that he, (the learned author,) through his critical powers, is competent to set aside the true sense of the law, and to insert his own ; but I hope your judicial readers will easily perceive the repugnancy in comparing them with Messrs. Colebrooke and Macnaghten's publications of the Hindoo Law.

With regard to the father's power in alienating the ancestral landed property, which is treated of by the learned author, I will say nothing more at present, than that it is discussed by Mr. Macnaghten in his Principles and Precedents of the Hindoo law : but I wish to know, Mr. Editor, does it follow from the doctrine of *Jimutavahana*, cited by the learned author, that a father has power to alienate the whole of the ancestral landed estate, or is it only applicable to the case when alienations

are made? If the former be asserted, how can the doctrines\* of *Jimutavahana*, *Sricrishna Tercaluncara*, *Raghunundana*, *Jugunnath Tercapunchanana*, and others, whose works are current in Bengal, be reconciled? But, on the other hand, if the latter supposition be proved to be correct, how can it be inferred, that, according to the *Dayabhaga*, the father has power to alienate the ancestral real property, as said by the learned author.

He, (the learned author,) exhibiting some ordinances regarding marriage, taxation, partition, and so forth, has made some hints on Sir F. W. Macnaghten's Considerations of the Hindoo Law, for his adverting that "*to make that invalid which was considered immoral.*" Mr. Editor, if according to the opinion of the learned author, it be considered as a general rule, that whatsoever alienations are made, they cannot be nullified, then should we not without hesitation say, that a sale without ownership, (that is, a sale by an individual who has no title to that which he has disposed of,) is not invalid? If it be argued that a father, according to the doctrines of *Jimutavahana*, has an independent power over ancestral real property, and can dispose of the whole of it at his free will, then what is to become of this doctrine: "What is bailed for delivery, what is lent for use, a pledge, joint property, a deposit, a son, a wife, and the whole estate of a man who has issue living." *Narada*. "The prohibition of giving away is declared to be eightfold: a man shall not give joint property, nor his son, nor his wife, *without their assent in extreme necessity*, nor a pledge, nor all his wealth, *if he have issue living, &c.*" *Vrihaspati*. "A wife, or a son, or the whole of a man's estate, shall not be given away or sold without the assent of the persons interested; he must keep them himself." *Catyayana*.?

In conclusion, I beg the favour of your judicious readers to see how far the Hindoo Law allows a father to alienate the patrimonial immoveables, and what are alienable.

Yours most obediently,

A HINDOO.

\* "The prohibition is not against donation, or other transfer of a small part incompatible with the support of the family. But, if the family cannot be supported without selling the whole immoveable and other property, even the whole may be sold, or otherwise disposed of." "If there be no land or other permanent property, but only jewels or similar valuables, he is not authorised to expend the whole." "And as appears from the word 'whole' repeated in that text, the gift of all the precious stones, pearls, and the like, inherited from the grandfather, is not immoral, but a gift of the whole immoveable property is an offence."

## No. II.

Reply to the above, published in the Hurkaru of the 24th September 1830.

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*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru and Chronicle.*

SIR,

AN article in your journal of the 20th instant, under the signature of "A HINDOO," offering some remarks on an Essay lately published by me on Inheritance, having been brought to my notice, I beg to express the gratification it affords me to find that the subject excites the public attention due to its importance; for it is reasonable to hope that truth will be speedily elicited by fair and impartial enquiry, and the ruinous effects of error be consequently averted.

I have endeavoured to establish "the full control of Hindoos over their ancestral property, according to the law of Bengal." In support of this position, I ask permission to quote the unequivocal authority of Jeemootuvahun himself, the author of the Dayubhagu.

First. After citing the text of Munoo in Ch. I., Sec. 14, the author offers his opinion (Sec. 15,) "The text is an answer to the question, why partition among sons is not authorised while their parents are living; namely, 'because they have not ownership at that time.'" He denies them (Sec. 16,) even dependent right in the property in possession of the father. The author then reasons in Sec. 19—"Besides, if sons had property in their father's wealth, partition would be demandable even against his consent; and there is no proof, that property is vested by birth alone; nor is birth stated in the law as means of acquisition." He concludes the subject in Sec. 30, saying—"Hence the text of Munoo and the rest (as Devulu) must be taken as shewing, that sons have not a right of ownership in the wealth of the living parents, but in the estate of both when deceased."

The author of the Dayubhagu applies the same authorities, and the same reasoning, to property ancestral, in Ch. II, Sec. 8, quoting passages of Munoo, Narudu, Gotumu, Boudhayunu, Sunkh, and Likhitu, &c., he affirms that these passages "declare without restriction, that sons have not a right to any part of the estate while the father is living, and that partition awaits his choice: For these texts, declaratory of a want of power, and requiring the father's consent, must relate also to property ancestral; since the same authors have not separately propounded a distinct period for the division of an estate inherited from an ancestor."

Secondly. After thus establishing the exclusive and independent ownership of a father in the property self-acquired and ancestral, the



author of the Dayubhagu defines, in the plainest language, what sort of power is attached to ownership. "For here also (in the very instance of land held in common) as in the case of other goods, there *equally exists a property consisting in the power of DISPOSAL AT PLEASURE.*" (Sec. 27.) Again: "By the reasoning thus set forth, if the elder brother have two shares of the father's estate, how should the highly venerable father, being the natural parent of the brothers, and competent to sell, give, or abandon the property, and being the root of all connexion with the *grand-father's estate*, be not entitled, in like circumstances, to a double portion of his own father's wealth? (Sec. 46.)"

Thirdly. To reconcile the power of free disposal by a father of property, whether self-acquired,\* ancestral, or held in common, with such moral precepts as prohibit such a disposal, through consideration towards the rest of the family; the author of the Dayubhagu, abhorring the idea of invalidating a sale or gift actually completed by a lawful and independent owner of his own property, proceeds, saying, "But the texts of Vyasu exhibiting a prohibition, are intended to shew a moral offence; since the family is distressed by a sale or gift, or other transfer, which argues a disposition in the person to make an ill use of his power as owner. *They are not meant to invalidate the sale or other transfer,*" (Sec. 28.)† He again repeats the same maxim with great explicitness in the succeeding Section, (30th,) conformably to the doctrines often inculcated by Munoo himself, as noticed in my little Essay, (para. 28, pp. 34, 35,) "Therefore, since it is denied that a gift or sale should be made, the precept is infringed by making one. But the gift or transfer *is not null*; for a fact cannot be altered by a hundred texts."

\* "Though immoveables or bipeds have been acquired by a man himself, a gift or sale of them should not be made by him, unless convening all the sons." Cited in the Dayubhagu, Ch. II. Sec. 29, page 32, "and the whole estate of a man who has issue living," should not be disposed of. *Narudu.* "A man shall not give joint property," &c. &c. *Vrihasputi.*

† So scriptural precepts and prohibitions are sometimes received as morally and legally binding, such as Matthew, Ch. V. v. 32, prohibiting divorcement of a wife without infidelity on her part; and v. 34, prohibiting oaths of all kinds, obeyed by Quakers, both morally and legally: but in some instances they are received as inculcating only moral duty, such as v. 42, "From him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away;" and the very prohibition of oaths is disregarded by Christians of other denominations, and their administration legally enforced, although some of the most eminent lawyers declare Christianity to be part and parcel of British Law.

For the reason stated by the author, in Section 28th, "since the family is distressed by a sale, gift, or other transfer," it is evident that a father or a partner subjects himself to a moral offence by the full disposal of all his property, provided his family be thereby involved in distress; but if the family consist of wealthy persons, and do not experience distress from such disposal, no moral offence can be charged to him; nor is he considered guilty of a breach even of moral duty, should he dispose of the whole property in his possession for the maintenance of the family or self preservation, *ordained to be incumbent upon man*, as is obvious from the following quotation. "But if the family cannot be supported without selling the whole immoveable and other property, even the whole may be sold, or otherwise disposed of, as appears from the obvious sense of the passage, and because it is directed that 'a man should by all means preserve himself.'" (Sec. 26.)

Fourthly. In his interpretation of such passages as apparently limit the power of a father with regard to his ancestral property, the author of the Dayubhagu treats them as applicable *only in the instance of a father's separating his sons from himself during life*, with allotments of the property, and *not to any other occasion*; and thus he *positively allows* to the father the *free disposal* of his *ancestral* property on all other occasions. Vide. Dayubhagu, Cha. II. Sec. 15, 16, 19, &c. &c.

As a calm enquiry into the merits of a literary question need not call forth the least unfriendly feeling amongst those who happen to espouse opposite views of the subject, it seems to me desirable that we should divest ourselves of disguise, and be fairly known to the public by our real names. I beg therefore to subscribe myself,

Your most obedient servant,

Sept. 23rd, 1830.

RAMMOHUN ROY.

### No III.

Extract from a Letter published in the Bengal Hurkaru of the 5th October, 1830, relating to the power of a Father over Ancestral Property.

THE learned author denied any limited power of the father over ancestral real property in his Essay, (page 11.) "a man in his possession of ancestral real property, though not under any tenure limiting it to the successive generations of his family, has the power to alienate the property at his free will;" but I am happy to find in his communication, that he, after some arguments partially admits it in these words:—"In his interpretation of such

passage as apparently limit the power of a father with regard to his ancestral property, the author of the Dayubhagu treats them as applicable only in the instance of a father's separating his sons from himself during life with allotments of the property, and not to any other occasion; and thus he positively allows to the father the free disposal of his ancestral property on all other occasions." Hence I beg to enquire, is not the learned author's doctrine evident, that a father has not an unlimited power to make an unequal partition of the patrimonial landed estate with his sons? If so, how should we admit, by parity of reason, that the author of the Dayubhagu "positively allows to the father free disposal of his ancestral property on all other occasions," as declared by the learned author? But we should rather reconcile the doctrine of the Dayubhagu ("they are not meant to invalidate the sale or other transfer") by alleging that if a father infringe the law, and give or sell his patrimonial immoveables for religious purposes, the act cannot be nullified; but if he disposes of it for civil affairs, the transfer is invalid.

Authorities:—"Even the king should not, in breach of law, give immoveable property for civil purposes, but he may give land or the like for religious uses; a gift of land without the assent of sons and the rest, is not consonant to duty, therefore arbitrators may think it has the appearance of a contract not made; consequently it is an established rule, according to Misru, that a gift of his whole estate by a man, who has issue living, is invalid, without the assent of the persons interested. But this supposes gifts for civil, not for religious cases, since it is recorded in Purans and other works, that Herishchandra and others gave their whole property for religious purposes. Be it any how in regard to the whole of man's estate acquired by himself; but the gift of what has descended from an ancestor, by a man who has a son living, is void, because he has not independent power over that property; for Narada declares null a gift made by one who is not an independent owner, and the law quoted by Vachespatis, Bhattacharya, and Raghunandana, declares a father not to be independent." Jugunnath Tarcapunchanana.

But if it is argued, that in former times many kings have given their whole kingdoms to a son, assigning some alimony for their own male issue, and are not such gifts for civil purposes? To this I humbly beg to reply, that a gift by a king for civil affairs is valid, provided he should not leave his family starving. Authorities:—Smriti: "All subjects are dependent; the king alone is free." The last text is attributed to Vyasa by Jemutavahana, and herein Raghunandana follows him. "What exceeds the food and clothing required by the members of the family, who are entitled to

maintenance, as above mentioned, may be given away, otherwise the family wanting food and clothing, in consequence of more being given, the donor's conduct is not virtuous." Jugunnath.

It becomes material to enquire, whether a man possessing his ancestral real property, is competent to give away the whole of it by will in favour of a son, leaving other sons under maintenance, or is he under the control of his sons, and is the will null and void? Mr. Colebrooke observes, that "a last will and testament is unknown to the Hindoo Law;" but it has been introduced in this country since the establishment of the British power, and we only admit its validity, wherein we see no discrepancies with the Hindoo Law. The term "will" may, in some cases, be explained as the deed of partition, and in others as the deed of gift; but when the term signifies a deed of partition, we ought not to declare that it is valid, for the father has not an independent power to make an unequal partition of the patrimony, as is clearly proved by the learned author. If we define it as a deed of gift, then we must proceed to point out the law of the gift; the term "gift" means constituting the donee's property after annulling the previous right of the donor, and the English Law on the subject of the will and testament has a different interpretation. Therefore, "it appears" not "inconsistent with the principles of justice," for a judge to consult his own understanding, in a case of dubious point. Menu:—"Let him fully consider the nature of truth, the state of the case, and his own person; and next, the witnesses, the place, the mode, and the time, firmly adhering to all the rules of practice." Vrihashpati:—"A decision must not be made solely by having recourse to the letter of written codes; since, if no decision were made according to the reason of law, ('or according to immemorial usage; for the word *yucti* admits both senses,') there might be a failure of justice."

At all events it must be confessed, that the learned author has taken too much liberty with the Chief Justice to assert "that the supreme authority in this country is resolved to introduce new maxims into the Law of Inheritance, hitherto in force in the province of Bengal; and has accordingly, in conformity with the doctrines found in the *Mitakshura* declared every disposition by a father of his ancestral real property, without the sanction of his sons and grandsons, to be null and void." By the late decision which the Chief Justice has passed in a case pending in the Supreme Court, and which has given rise to the Essay by the learned author, no new maxim has been introduced, and no custom of Bengal has been infringed.

In the concluding part of his communication, the learned author

desires "that we should divest ourselves of disguise, and be fairly known to the public by our real names;" and with this view he subscribes his own name. I should have no objection to gratify this desire, had not I known that my name would be of no consequence to the public, and would add but little weight to the positions I have advanced. If, however, my assertions be correct, (and I leave them to be decided by your judicious readers,) the end of my writing, which was to ascertain the truth of these important questions, is accomplished.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

October 1st, 1830.

A HINDOO.

#### No. IV.

Reply to the above, published in the Hurkaru of the 13th October 1830.

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*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru and Chronicle.*

SIR,

Another article on the Hindoo Law of Inheritance, under the signature of "A HINDOO," having appeared in your Journal of the 5th Instant, I beg to offer a few remarks on the matters therein comprised.

Your learned correspondent has filled a large space with the illustration of his views as to the term "woman's property," a subject which is entirely foreign to the main point in question,\* "the full control of Hindoos over their ancestral property, according to the law of Bengal," and which may, therefore, be separately discussed, without distracting the attention of the reader, by mingling the one with the other: under this impression I deem it proper that these two different positions should be divided, and my present reply be confined to the subject at issue.

Your learned correspondent first states, that although in my Essay I ascribed to a father the power of free disposal of his ancestral property, yet, in my reply, dated the 24th ultimo, I have partially admitted limitation by saying, that "in his interpretation of such passages as apparently limit the power of a father, with regard to his ancestral property, the author of Dayubhagu treats them as applicable only in the instance of a father's separating his sons from himself, during life, with allotments of the property, and not to any other occasion." To rectify this misapprehension, I beg to refer the reader to my Essay, para. 22, p. 29, where he

\* Therefore omitted as irrelevant, but afterwards answered separately.

will find a precisely corresponding statement in these terms: "As the phrase in the above text of Vishnool, 'when a father separates his sons from himself,' prohibits the free disposal, by a father, of his ancestral property, *only* on the occasion of allotments among his sons, to allow them separate establishments." Is it not evident that I have equally, in my Essay and in the Appendix, maintained the doctrine, that according to the Dayubhagu, a sale, gift, or other transfer by a father of his ancestral property, is legally valid; and that while separating his sons from himself during life, a father should give them equal portions of the property derived from his ancestors? So much for the charge of inconsistency.

In answer to the query advanced by your learned correspondent, "how should we admit, by parity of reason, that the author of the Dayubhagu positively allows to the father free disposal of his ancestral property on all other occasions," I beg to bring again to the recollection of the reader some of the passages of the Dayubhagu itself, Chap. II. Sec. 8, 27, and 46, (quoted by me in the Appendix, page 52,\* line 19,) manifestly permitting the free disposal by a father of his ancestral property.

Supported by the text of Vishnool, "when a father separates his sons, &c.," (Chap. II. Sec. 16,) the author of the Dayubhagu declares such sacred passages as seemingly limit the power of a father touching his ancestral estate, to be applicable only in the instance of a father's separating his sons from himself during life, and not to any other occasion; and thus excepts from the general rule this instance only, saying "or the meaning of the text (cited in Sec. 9) may be, as set forth by Dhareshwur, a father, *occupied in giving allotments at his pleasure*, has equal ownership with sons in the paternal grandfather's estate. He is not privileged to make an unequal *distribution of it* at his choice, as he is in regard to his own acquired property." (Chap. II. Sec. 15.) The author of the Dayubhagu proceeds still further, and applies the above limitation of the power of a father over his ancestral property only to such a father as is designated by the appellation of "*issue of the soil*" in the following language:—"The text before cited (Sec. 9) declaratory of the equal ownership of father and son, must be explained as intending a *father who was* (Kshetriyu) *issue of the soil or wife*." That is, a son of two fathers, or begotten by appointment. Hence, according to the latter exception, the limitation of a father's power is applicable only to such a father as is called *issue of the soil*, now rarely to be found; while, according to the former, the limitation is applied only to the time of separation by a father of his sons from himself with

\* See page 411 of this Volume.—ED.

allotments. This alternative decidedly proves, that in all other instances the Dayubhagu positively allows to the father the free disposal of his ancestral equally with his self-acquired property.

A sale or other transfer by the father, of the whole ancestral and self-acquired property, for the support of the family, for the performance of indispensable religious rites, as a part of domestic duty, or for self-preservation, is declared by the author of the Dayubhagu to be consistent with the sacred texts ; hence, in such cases, he attaches no moral offence to the father for so doing, saying, " But if the family cannot be *supported* without selling the whole immoveable and other property, even the *whole* may be sold or otherwise disposed of ; as appears *from the obvious sense of the passage*, (quoted in Ch. II. Sec. 22,) and because it is *directed* that a man should *by all means preserve himself*." But such sale or other transfer as occasions distress to the family, and is consequently prohibited by the sacred texts inculcating moral duty, subjects the doer, according to the Dayubhagu, to the reproach of a moral offence, though the sale or transfer actually made by a lawful owner must stand valid.—" But the texts of Vyas, (cited in Sec. 27,) exhibiting a prohibition, are *intended to shew a moral offence*, since the family is distressed by a sale, gift, or other transfer, which argues a disposition in the person to *make an ill use of his power as owner*. They are *not meant to invalidate the sale* or other transfer," (Sec. 28.) Hence an attempt to reconcile the doctrine thus laid down in the Dayubhagu, with that recently proposed in opposition to the plainest language and the obvious purport of that work, is but an effort to upset the authority of the universally acknowledged law long prevailing throughout Bengal. As to the particulars of the precepts which should be considered as only morally binding, and those that are both legally and morally binding, I beg to refer the reader to my Essay, pages 29, 30, 31,\* par. 23, 24, 25, 26 ; and to the Appendix, No. II note 2nd, page 53.\*

Under the head of " Authorities," (not specified,) your learned correspondent inserts the following passage : "*Even the king should not, in breach of law, give immoveable property for civil purposes*," &c. In the succeeding paragraph he conditionally admits a gift by a king, even for civil purposes, saying, that "*a gift by a king for civil affairs is valid, provided he should not leave his family starving*." Your learned correspondent immediately afterwards quotes : "*All subjects are dependent, the king alone is free*," in opposition to both the preceding assertions. I trust your learned correspondent does not mean, by the above text, to establish

\* See pages 294, 395 and 412 of this Volume.—ED.

that all subjects have a dependent right in their lawful possessions, and that the king is privileged to take or give them away at his pleasure. While ascertaining the real doctrine of the author of the Dayubhagu, as to the power of a father over ancestral property, your learned correspondent does not quote a single passage from that author, but he quotes Misru, who is well known to have opposed the author of the Dayubhagu in this and other points.

Your learned correspondent finally quotes Jugunnath on the subject at issue in these terms: "What exceeds food and clothing required by the members of the family who are entitled to maintenance, as above mentioned, may be given away; otherwise the family wanting food and clothing, in consequence of more being given, the donor's conduct is not virtuous." Pray, Mr. Editor, does not Jugunnath exactly follow the author of the Dayubhagu, by maintaining the doctrine, that if the family is distressed by a gift, the donation thus performed attaches *a moral offence to the donor*?

In the concluding part of his letter, your learned correspondent introduces the subject of a last Will or Testament. I hope I may be able to spare a few hours shortly for the consideration of this point: in the mean time,

I remain your most obedient servant,

Oct. 12, 1830.

RAMMOHUN ROY.

## No. V.

Continuation of the above Reply, published in the "Bengal Hurkaru" of the 21st October, 1830.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru and Chronicle.*

SIR,

Your learned correspondent, "A HINDOO," introduces the subject of a last Will and Testament in his letter which appeared in your journal of the 5th instant, questioning the validity of such instruments, on the authority of the following language of Mr. Colebrooke: "A last Will and Testament is *unknown to the Hindoo Law*, but it has been introduced in this country *since the establishment of the British power*, and we only admit its validity wherein we see no discrepancies with the Hindoo Law." I much regret that Mr. Colebrooke, an eminent scholar, and diligent student of Hindoo Law, while offering the above opinion, should have overlooked the very first part of the gloss on the Dayubhagu, by Shree Krishnu, which he "chiefly and preferably used," and which, in the preface to his transla-



tion of that work, (page 6,) he characterises as "the most celebrated of the glosses on the text." "Its authority has been long gaining ground in the schools of law throughout Bengal, and it has almost banished from them the other expositions of the Dayubhagu, being ranked, in general estimation, next after the treatises of Jeemootvahunu and of Rughoonundun." The passage I allude to is to be found in that celebrated gloss, expounding the purport of Sec. 38, Ch. I. of the Dayubhagu.

Nor does this learned gentleman seem to have recollected his own translation of the same passage, which runs in these words: "But when he, for the sake of obviating disputes among his sons, determines their respective allotments, continuing, however, the exercise of power over them, that is not partition, for his property still subsists, since there has been no relinquishment of it on his part. Therefore the use of the term partition, in such an instance, is lax and indeterminate." That is, in this instance the father *does not separate his sons from himself with allotments*; he only declares what certain portion of his property each son is to enjoy immediately after the extinction of his ownership by death, civil or natural; such previously determined division, therefore, cannot in reality be styled *partition* during the life of the father, which implies separation, and consequently does not fall within that only case in which his privileges over ancestral property are restricted.

To shew the priority of Shree Krishnu's era to the British conquest of India, I beg to refer the reader to the Preface to the translation of the Dayubhagu, by Mr. Colebrooke, (page 7, and the note therein contained,) giving an account of the probable periods at which Shree Krishnu and some other commentators of the Dayubhagu lived. They shew clearly that Shree Krishnu, whose authority is esteemed next to that of Jeemootvahunu, existed and died before the *establishment of British power* in India. How then, Mr. Editor, could Shree Krishnu declare the *law* on the point, if the practice of a father's prescribing the manner of distributing his property after his ownership should be extinct, was unknown at his time?

So the celebrated Radhamohun Vidyavachusputi, while treating of previously determined partition by a father, quotes the following passage:—"With regard to debts, ploughing, stipulation, *previous partition* of property, and other transactions, whatever was determined by a father becomes incumbent upon his sons after his demise." This system of predetermination of allotments has been in most frequent use in Bengal from time immemorial; insomuch, that few fathers, possessed both of prudence and of property, have omitted a practice so effectually calculated

to obviate future contentions in their family. Aged persons of respectability can still be found to certify this fact. Besides, historical works in Sanscrit manifestly shew the frequency of this practice among eminent princes and celebrated characters, some soon, others long before their retirement or death. I may, perhaps, on a future occasion, have sufficient command of time to prepare a list of conspicuous instances ; but, for the present, I beg to refer the reader to the Ramayunu and the Muha Bharutu, works commonly read, and highly revered by the Hindoo community at large.

Your learned correspondent observes that I have taken too much liberty with the Chief Justice, and that I was not correctly informed as to the particulars of the decision passed in the case pending in the Supreme Court, which gave rise to the late Essay by me, a charge which, I beg to declare, is without foundation, since neither in the Essay nor in the Appendix, can any expression, I venture to affirm, be found that borders on disrespect towards his Lordship ; and to vindicate the information I have been furnished with, I may be permitted to appeal to every Barrister of the Court, who had an opportunity of being acquainted with the opinions expressed, and which I have endeavoured to combat.

I fully concur with your learned correspondent in the assertion, that "a Judge may consult his own understanding in a case of dubious point." I, at the same time, trust your learned correspondent will condescendingly agree with me, when I repeat that "a Judge is required to observe strict adherence to the established law, where its language is clear," like that of the Dayubhagu.

I remain, Mr. Editor,

Your most obedient servant,

RAMMOHUN ROY.

\* *October 20th, 1830.*

## No. VI.

Extract from a Letter published in the Bengal Hurkaru, and in the Herald of 7th Nov. 1830, relating to the power of a father over Ancestral Property.

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IN his second communication the learned author, to establish his own doctrine, that a father, according to the Dayubhagu, has power to alienate the ancestral real property at his free will, referred the reader to the pas-

sages of the *Dayubhagu*, Chap. II. Sec. 8, 27, and 46, and those of his own Essay. The passages of the *Dayubhagu*, above referred to, do not manifestly admit the free disposal by a father of his ancestral property ; for the first passage denotes only that the partition of ancestral property can not take place while the father is living, without his consent and choice ; the second does not disable a coparcener from alienating his own share of joint property ; and the last enjoins that a father shall have two shares at a partition in his life time. To prove this, I beg to refer your readers to the above passages themselves.

The learned author, in order to support his opinion, repeatedly quotes the passage of the *Dayubhagu*, Sec. 28, Chap. II. ("They are not meant to invalidate the sale or other transfer.") To refute this, I can at once say, that that passage does not enjoin, that a father has power to alienate his ancestral property, as declared by him, but it is meant to shew the validity of a sale, or like alienation by a coparcener of his own share, as is clearly evident from the following passages of *Sricrishna Tercalancara*, the Commentator of the *Dayubhagu*.—"Since there is not a general property of the whole, a community of rights, consisting in there being numerous owners to the same thing, does not exist : and community signifies only the state of not being separated. But here it is the notion of the author of the *Dayubhagu*, who maintains a several right to a part vested in each person, that nothing prevents a donation or other transfer of the coparcener's own share, even before partition, since a common property is already vested in him." Vide *Dayubhagu*, page 32, Annotation 28.

The learned author, from a passage of *Sricrishna Tercalancara*, commenting on Sec. 38. Chap. I. of the *Dayubhagu*, infers that the will is not foreign to the Hindoo Law. To this, at present, I can only reiterate that it is unknown to the law in question, and the passage\* itself confirms my observations, for it only exhibits the power of the father in determining the shares of his sons, and that determination is termed *Bhacta Vibhagu*, and it does not admit the father's unlimited power over ancestral real property.

As, however, the learned author observes, that a last will or testament is not foreign to the Hindoo Law, I shall be greatly obliged by his shewing the corresponding *Sanscrit* term for *testament*, *testator*, *legacy*, *legatee*, and

\* "But when the father, for the sake of obviating disputes among his sons, determines their respective allotments, continuing, however, the exercise of power over them, that is not partition : for his property still subsists, since there has been no relinquishment of it on his part. Therefore, the use of the term partition, in such an instance, is lax and indeterminate."

*executor*, in any of the Hindoo Law works. When the learned author shall point out the above corresponding terms, I shall then endeavour to prove that his censures against those learned persons, the Honorable the Chief Justice and Mr. Colebrooke, are unjust, and void of reason. In the mean time, I beg to conclude, Mr. Editor, and remain,

Your obedient servant,

A HINDOO.

*November 2, 1830.*

## No. VII.

Reply to the above, published in the *Hurkaru* of the 15th Nov. 1830.

*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru and Chronicle.*

SIR,

YOUR learned correspondent, under the signature of "A HINDOO," has recurred to the subject of Inheritance, in his communication of the 2nd instant, beginning by citing the passages of the *Dayubhagu*, (Chap. II. Sec. 8, 27, and 46,) quoted by me in my Appendix. He then proceeds to say, that "the passages of the *Dayubhagu*, above referred to, do not manifestly admit the free disposal by a father of his ancestral property; for, the first passage denotes only that the partition of the ancestral property cannot take place while the father is living, without his consent and choice; the second does not disable a coparcener from alienating his own share of joint property, and the last enjoins that a father shall have two shares at a partition in his life time." I am, therefore, obliged to recite those passages severally, and leave the reader to judge.

In the first passage, (Chap. II. Sec. 8,) the author of the *Dayubhagu*, after quoting the texts of Munoo and others, affirms that these authors "declare, without restriction, that sons *have not a right to any part of the estate* while the father is living, and that partition awaits his choice; for these texts, declaratory of a *want of power*, and requiring the father's consent, MUST RELATE ALSO TO PROPERTY ANCESTRAL, since the same authors have not separately propounded a distinct period for the division of an estate inherited from an ancestor." I would now ask if the sons, as appears clearly by this passage, have no right to any part of the father's property ancestral or acquired, has not the father the sole right in that property?

And is not this something more than a mere declaration, that "partition of ancestral property cannot take place while the father is living, without his consent and choice," as affirmed by your learned correspondent? The author of the Mitakshura is of the contrary opinion, that sons have a right to the ancestral property, even while the father is living; and upon this ground he denies the father's power of disposal of ancestral property without the consent of his sons, saying, "In such property, which was acquired by the paternal grandfather, through acceptance of gifts, or by conquest or other means, [as commerce, agriculture, or service,] the ownership of father and son is notorious; and, THEREFORE, partition does take place. For, or because the right is equal or alike; THEREFORE, partition is not restricted to be made by the father's choice; nor has he a double share." Mitakshura, Chap. I. Sec. 5. Art. 5.

The second passage quoted by me, and referred to by your learned correspondent, (Chap. II. Sec. 27,) is as follows: "For here also, [in the very instance of land held in common,] as in the case of other goods, there equally exists a *property consisting in the power of disposal at pleasure*." I beg to submit whether this passage does only declare the validity of the disposal of land, held in common by a parcener, as noticed by your learned correspondent; or does it, as I contend, define ownership, with regard to land held in common, as equally with that in goods to consist in the power of disposal at pleasure?

I now proceed to the 3rd passage alluded to by your learned correspondent, (Chap. II. Sec. 46,) which thus runs: "By the reasoning thus set forth, if the elder brother have two shares of the father's estate, how should the highly venerable father, being the natural parent of the brothers, and competent to sell, give or abandon the property, and being the root of all connexion with the grandfather's estate, be not entitled, in like circumstances, to a double portion of his own father's wealth?" I may here again safely appeal to the reader, whether this passage merely "enjoins, that a father shall have two shares at a partition in his life time," as alleged by your learned correspondent; or whether it does not entitle a father to a double share of his ancestral property while separating his sons from himself, on the ground that he is possessed of the power "to sell, give, or abandon the property, and is the root of all connexion with the grandfather's estate?"

His next remarks apply to the Section 27, Chap. II. containing the following texts of Vyas, ("A single parcener may not, without consent of the rest, make a sale or gift of the whole immoveable estate, nor of what is common to the family:" "separated kinsmen, as those who are

unseparated, are equal in respect of immoveables : for one has not power over the whole to give, mortgage, or sell it,"") and also, to the Section 28th, quoted by me, (" But the texts of Vyas, exhibiting a prohibition, are intended to shew a moral offence, since the family is distressed by a sale, gift, or other transfer, which argues a disposition in the person to make an ill use of his power as owner. They are not meant to invalidate the sale or other transfer.") With reference to these quotations, your learned correspondent observes, "I can at once say that that passage does not enjoin, that a father has power to alienate his ancestral property ; but it is meant to shew the validity of a sale or like alienation by a parcener of his own share."

I first beg to be permitted to bring to the notice of your learned correspondent the terms "Kinsmen," "separated" or "unseparated," whom the latter texts of Vyas, quoted above, prohibit from disposing of immoveables at their free will ; and then to ask, whether this text (equally with that preceding it, forbidding a parcener from disposing of property held in common,) is not represented by the author of the Dayubhagu (in Sect. 28,) as "shewing a moral offence" in disregard to the prohibition, and "not meaning to invalidate the sale or other transfer?" The term "Kinsmen" is well explained in Dr. Wilson's Dictionary, enumerating a father, grandfather, great grandfather, &c. among kinsmen. Hence, a father, according to the Dayubhagu, may dispose of immoveables, subjecting himself, in certain cases, to the blame of moral offence, in like manner as a parcener may dispose of his undivided share. Your learned correspondent may now be pleased to say candidly, how far his conclusion, that the above passage (28) only shews "the validity of a sale or like alienation" "by a coparcener of his own share," is accurate?

As to the quotation from Shree Krishnu, by your learned correspondent, it relates to the doctrine maintained by the author of the Dayubhagu, that a several right to a part is vested in each parcener, and that each has not property in the whole ; and thus Shree Krishnu justifies a sale or gift by a partner of his share, without at all limiting the power of a father over ancestral property.

I quoted in my last communication, a passage from the commentary of Shree Krishnu, and another from that of the late Radhamohun, shewing that the practice of making a will was known to the Hindoo Law, without any attempt, on my part, to prove by inference from this separate and distinct subject of enquiry, a father's unrestricted power over ancestral property—I may, therefore, be permitted to observe, that your learned correspondent might have dispensed with the assertion, that the passage

"does not admit the father's unlimited power over ancestral property." It was not cited as so doing.

Your learned correspondent admits that the passage of Shree Krishnu "exhibits the power of the father, in determining the shares of his sons, and that determination is termed 'Bhaktu Vibhagu,'" or partition in a loose sense ; since the father still continues the exercise of power over those predetermined allotments. But he wishes me to point out the corresponding Sanskrit terms for testament, testator, &c. used in English, in connection with a last will. In reply, I beg to observe, that since the will is termed Bhaktu Vibhagu, or *partition*, in a loose sense, the Sanskrit terms relating to Will must bear the names compounded with "partition," such as "Bhagu Lekhu" a will, "Vibhukta" a testator, "Vibhaktu" legacy, "Bhagee" legatee, "Niyogekrit" executor, and so forth, all in a loose sense, but in common use. I remain in haste,

Your most obedient servant,

Nov. 13, 1830.

RAMMOHUN ROY.

P. S. You may, perhaps, hear from me again before quitting the River.

## No. VIII.

Published in the Bengal Hurkaru of the 23rd Nov. 1830.

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*To the Editor of the Bengal Hurkaru and Chronicle.*

SIR,

I DID, or rather could, not until yesterday, read with attention that part of a letter which appeared in your journal of the 5th ultimo, under the signature of "a Hindoo," which relates to the subject of "*Streedhan*," or woman's property. Your learned correspondent enquires "whether the publication of the Essay (by me) is intended only to shew the discrepancies betwixt the Mitakshura and Dayabhagu, or to point out the laws current in Bengal and Benares?" Your learned correspondent then adds, "If the former supposition be correct, I can recommend the learned author to say as he pleases ; but, on the other hand, if the latter be just and proper, then I beg to refer to the doctrines of Balam Bhuttu, Mitru Misru, Cumulkar, and other Western writers and commentators." In reply to the query, I beg leave to state that the Essay in question was written expressly with a

view to shew discrepancies between the doctrines maintained by the *Dayubhagu* and those inculcated in the *Mitakshura*, and for the satisfaction of your learned correspondent, I quote the language of the Essay on this very subject. "Judgments have accordingly been given on its (*Dayubhagu's*) authority, in many most important cases, in which it differs materially from the *Mitakshura*," (page 8, par. 6.) Now, your learned correspondent can have no objection to the assertion I made as to the differences existing between the *Dayubhagu* and the *Mitakshura*, with regard to "woman's property," as he has in one of the alternatives "recommended" me "to say" as "I please."

I fully agree with your learned correspondent as to the encroachments gradually made by the modern Hindoo Law expounders, on the rights of females, laying stress upon shallow reasoning and unconnected passages—a fact which I noticed in a pamphlet published by me in 1822, in these terms, "To compare the laws of female inheritance, which they (the ancients) enacted, and which afforded that sex the opportunity of the enjoyment of life, with that which moderns and our contemporaries have gradually introduced and established, to their complete privation, directly or indirectly, of most of those objects that render life agreeable."

I shall be most happy to make an attempt, on a future occasion, to illustrate this subject. In the mean time,

I remain, your very obedient servant,

RAMMOHUN ROY,

*Kedgerie, Nov. 19, 1830.\**

\* Some of these letters were written by the Raja on board ship on his way to England.—ED.





**PETITIONS**  
**AGAINST THE**  
**PRESS REGULATION.**



**CALCUTTA :**

**1823.**



## MEMORIAL TO THE SUPREME COURT.\*

TO THE HONOURABLE SIR FRANCIS MAGNAGHTEN,

*Sole Acting Judge of the Supreme Court of  
Judicature at Fort William in Bengal.*

MY LORD,

In consequence of the late Rule and Ordinance passed by His Excellency the Governor General in Council, regarding the Publication of Periodical Works, your Memorialists consider themselves called upon with due submission, to represent to you their feelings and sentiments on the subject.

Your Memorialists beg leave, in the first place, to bring to the notice of your Lordship, various proofs given by the Natives of this country of their unshaken loyalty to, and unlimited confidence in the British Government of India, which may

\* In 1823 Mr. Buckingham, the proprietor of a newspaper named the *Calcutta Journal* published at Calcutta, having incurred the displeasure of the Government of Mr. Adam, the then (Officiating) Governor General, was ordered to leave the country, and soon afterwards a Rule and Ordinance was passed on the 14th of March 1823, curtailing the freedom of the press. According to the Act of Parliament, 13 Geo. III. Cap. 63, every regulation made by the Governor General then required to be sanctioned and registered by the Supreme Court before it passed into law, (a provision since repealed by Sec. 45 of 3 and 4 Wm. IV. Cap. 85.) Leave was obtained by Mr. Fergusson, Barrister-at-law, on behalf of Mr. Buckingham for protesting against sanction being accorded to the Regulation by the Supreme Court. The matter was heard by Sir Francis Macnaghten. It was for this occasion that this memorial was drawn up and was read before the Court by the Registrar on the 31st of March 1823. The Supreme Court having, however, registered the regulation, a petition to King George IV. was drawn up by Ram Mohun Roy, signed by many respectable men and sent to England. The petition follows this memorial.—Ed.

remove from your mind any apprehension of the Government being brought into hatred and contempt, or of the peace, harmony, and good order of society in this country, being liable to be interrupted and destroyed, as implied in the preamble of the above Rule and Ordinance.

First. Your Lordship is well aware, that the Natives of Calcutta and its vicinity, have voluntarily entrusted Government with millions of their wealth, without indicating the least suspicion of its stability and good faith, and reposing in the sanguine hope that their property being so secured, their interests will be as permanent as the British Power itself; while on the contrary, their fathers were invariably compelled to conceal their treasures in the bowels of the earth, in order to preserve them from the insatiable rapacity of their oppressive Rulers.

Secondly. Placing entire reliance on the promises made by the British Government at the time of the Perpetual Settlement of the landed property in this part of India, in 1793, the Landholders have since, by constantly improving their estates, been able to increase their produce, in general very considerably;\* whereas, prior to that period, and under former Governments, their forefathers were obliged to lay waste the greater part of their estates, in order to make them appear of inferior value, that they might not excite the cupidity of Government, and thus cause their rents to be increased or themselves to be dispossessed of their lands,—a pernicious practice which often incapacitated the Landholders from discharging even their stipulated revenue to Government, and reduced their families to poverty.

Thirdly. During the last wars which the British Government were obliged to undertake against neighbouring Powers, it is well known, that the great body of Natives of wealth and respectability, as well as the Landholders of consequence, offered up regular prayers to the objects of their worship for the

\* Generally, it is said, two or three fold.—REPORTER.

success of the British arms from a deep conviction that under the sway of that nation, their improvement, both mental and social, would be promoted, and their lives, religion, and property be secured. Actuated by such feelings, even in those critical times, which are the best test of the loyalty of the subject, they voluntarily came forward with a large portion of their property to enable the British Government to carry into effect the measures necessary for its own defence, considering the cause of the British as their own, and firmly believing that on its success, their own happiness and prosperity depended.

Fourthly. It is manifest as the light of day, that the general subjects of observation and the constant and the familiar topic of discourse among the Hindoo community of Bengal, are the literary and political improvements which are continually going on in the state of the country under the present system of government, and a comparison between their present auspicious prospects and their hopeless condition under their former Rulers.

Under these circumstances, your Lordship cannot fail to be impressed with a full conviction, that whoever charges the Natives of this country with disloyalty, or insinuates aught to the prejudice of their fidelity and attachment to the British Government, must either be totally ignorant of the affairs of this country and the feelings and sentiments of its inhabitants, as above stated, or, on the contrary, be desirous of misrepresenting the people and misleading the Government, both here and in England, for unworthy purposes of his own.

Your Memorialists must confess, that these feelings of loyalty and attachment, of which the most unequivocal proofs stand on record, have been produced by the wisdom and liberality displayed by the British Government in the means adopted for the gradual improvement of their social and domestic condition, by the establishment of Colleges, Schools, and other beneficial institutions in this city, among which the erection of a British Court of Judicature for the more effectual administration of Justice, deserves to be gratefully remembered.

A proof of the Natives of India being more and more attached to the British Rule in proportion as they experience from it the blessings of just and liberal treatment, is, that the Inhabitants of Calcutta, who enjoy in many respects very superior privileges to those of their fellow subjects in other parts of the country, are known to be in like measure more warmly devoted to the existing Government ; nor is it at all wonderful they should in loyalty be not at all inferior to British-born Subjects, since they feel assured of the possession of the same civil and religious liberty, which is enjoyed in England, without being subjected to such heavy taxation as presses upon the people there.

Hence the population of Calcutta, as well as the value of land in this City, have rapidly increased of late years, notwithstanding the high rents of houses and the dearness of all the necessaries of life compared with other parts of the country, as well as the Inhabitants being subjected to additional taxes, and also liable to the heavy costs necessarily incurred in case of suits before the Supreme Court.

Your Lordship may have learned from the works of the Christian Missionaries, and also from other sources, that ever since the art of printing has become generally known among the Natives of Calcutta, numerous Publications have been circulated in the Bengallee Language, which by introducing free discussion among the Natives and inducing them to reflect and inquire after knowledge, have already served greatly to improve their minds and ameliorate their condition. This desirable object has been chiefly promoted by the establishment of four Native Newspapers, two in the Bengallee and two in the Persian Language, published for the purpose of communicating to those residing in the interior of the country, accounts of whatever occurs worthy of notice at the Presidency or in the country, and also the interesting and valuable intelligence of what is passing in England and in other parts of the world, conveyed through the English Newspapers or other channels.

Your Memorialists are unable to discover any disturbance of the peace, harmony, and good order of society, that has arisen from the English Press, the influence of which must necessarily be confined to that part of the community who understand the language thoroughly; but they are quite confident, that the publications in the Native Languages, whether in the shape of a Newspaper or any other work, have none of them been calculated to bring the Government of the country into hatred and contempt, and that they have not proved, as far as can be ascertained by the strictest inquiry, in the slightest degree injurious; which has very lately been acknowledged in one of the most respectable English Missionary works. So far from obtruding upon Government groundless representations, Native Authors and Editors have always restrained themselves from publishing even such facts respecting the judicial proceedings in the Interior of the country as they thought were likely at first view to be obnoxious to Government.

While your Memorialists were indulging the hope that Government, from a conviction of the manifold advantages of being put in possession of full and impartial information regarding what is passing in all parts of the Country, would encourage the establishment of Newspapers in the cities and districts under the special patronage and protection of Government, that they might furnish the Supreme Authorities in Calcutta with an accurate account of local occurrences and reports of Judicial proceedings, —they have the misfortune to observe, that on the contrary, his Excellency the Governor General in Council has lately promulgated a Rule and Ordinance imposing severe restraints on the Press and prohibiting all Periodical Publications even at the Presidency and in the Native Languages, unless sanctioned by a License from Government, which is to be revocable at pleasure whenever it shall appear to Government that a publication has contained any thing of an unsuitable character.

Those Natives who are in more favourable circumstances and of respectable character, have such an invincible prejudice against



making a voluntary affidavit, or undergoing the solemnities of an oath, that they will never think of establishing a publication which can only be supported by a series of oaths and affidavits, abhorrent to their feelings and derogatory to their reputation amongst their countrymen.

After this Rule and Ordinance shall have been carried into execution, your Memorialists are therefore extremely sorry to observe, that a complete stop will be put to the diffusion of knowledge and the consequent mental improvement now going on, either by translations into the popular dialect of this country from the learned languages of the East, or by the circulation of literary intelligence drawn from foreign publications. And the same cause will also prevent those Natives who are better versed in the laws and customs of the British Nation, from communicating to their fellow subjects a knowledge of the admirable system of Government established by the British, and the peculiar excellencies of the means they have adopted for the strict and impartial administration of justice. Another evil of equal importance in the eyes of a just Ruler, is, that it will also preclude the Natives from making the Government readily acquainted with the errors and injustice that may be committed by its executive officers in the various parts of this extensive country; and it will also preclude the Natives from communicating frankly and honestly to their Gracious Sovereign in England and his Council, the real condition of his Majesty's faithful subjects in this distant part of his dominions and the treatment they experience from the local Government: since such information cannot in future be conveyed to England, as it has heretofore been, either by the translations from the Native publications inserted in the English Newspapers printed here and sent to Europe, or by the English publications which the Natives themselves had in contemplation to establish, before this Rule and Ordinance was proposed.

After this sudden deprivation of one of the most precious of their rights, which has been freely allowed them since the

Establishment of the British Power, a right which they are not, and cannot be, charged with having ever abused, the Inhabitants of Calcutta would be no longer justified in boasting, that they are fortunately placed by Providence under the protection of the whole British Nation, or that the King of England and his Lords and Commons are their Legislators, and that they are secured in the enjoyment of the same civil and religious privileges that every Briton is entitled to in England.

Your Memorialists are persuaded, that the British Government is not disposed to adopt the political maxim so often acted upon by Asiatic Princes, that the more a people are kept in darkness, their Rulers will derive the greater advantages from them, since, by reference to History, it is found that this was but a short-sighted policy which did not ultimately answer the purpose of its authors. On the contrary, it rather proved disadvantageous to them ; for we find that as often as an ignorant people, when an opportunity offered, have revolted against their Rulers, all sorts of barbarous excesses and cruelties have been the consequence ; whereas a people naturally disposed to peace and ease, when placed under a good Government from which they experience just and liberal treatment, must become the more attached to it, in proportion as they become enlightened and the great body of the people are taught to appreciate the value of the blessings they enjoy under its Rule.

Every good Ruler, who is convinced of the imperfection of human nature, and reverences the Eternal Governor of the world, must be conscious of the great liability to error in managing the affairs of a vast empire ; and therefore he will be anxious to afford every individual the readiest means of bringing to his notice whatever may require his interference. To secure this important object, the unrestrained Liberty of Publication, is the only effectual means that can be employed. And should it ever be abused, the established Law of the Land is very properly armed with sufficient powers to punish those who may be found guilty of misrepresenting the conduct or character of Govern-

ment, which are effectually guarded by the same Laws to which individuals must look for protection of their reputation and good name. .

Your Memorialists conclude by humbly entreating your Lordship to take this Memorial into your gracious consideration ; and that you will be pleased by not registering the above Rule and Ordinance, to permit the Natives of this Country to continue in possession of the civil rights and privileges which they and their fathers have so long enjoyed under the auspices of the British nation, whose kindness and confidence, they are not aware of having done any thing, to forfeit.

CHUNDER COOMAR TAGORE,  
DEWARKU NAUTH TAGORE,  
RAMMOHUN ROY,  
HURCHUNDER GHOSE,  
GOWREE CHURN BONNERGEE,  
PROSSUNNU COOMAR TAGORE.

# APPEAL TO THE KING IN COUNCIL.

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TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,

We, your Majesty's faithful subjects, Natives of India and Inhabitants of Calcutta, being placed by Providence under the sovereign care and protection of the august head of the British nation, look up to your Majesty as the guardian of our lives, property, and religion, and when our rights are invaded and our prayers disregarded by the subordinate authorities, we beg leave to carry our complaints before your Majesty's throne, which is happily established in mercy and justice, amidst a generous people celebrated throughout the earth as the enemies of tyranny, and distinguished under your royal auspices, as the successful defenders of Europe from Continental usurpation.

2nd. We, your Majesty's faithful subjects, now come before you under the most painful circumstances, the local executive authorities having suddenly assumed the power of legislation in matters of the highest moment, and abolished legal privileges of long standing, without the least pretence that we have ever abused them, and made an invasion on our civil rights such as is unprecedented in the History of British Rule in Bengal, by a measure which either indicates a total disregard of the civil rights and privileges of your Majesty's faithful subjects, or an intention to encourage a cruel and unfounded suspicion of our attachment to the existing Government.

3rd. The greater part of Hindoostan having been for several centuries subject to Mahumuddan Rule, the civil and religious rights of its original inhabitants were constantly trampled upon, and from the habitual oppression of the conquerors, a great body of their subjects in the southern Peninsula (Dukhin), afterwards

called Marhattahs, and another body in the western parts now styled Sikhs, were at last driven to revolt ; and when the Mussulman power became feeble, they ultimately succeeded in establishing their independence ; but the Natives of Bengal wanting vigour of body, and averse to active exertion, remained during the whole period of the Mahumuddan conquest, faithful to the existing Government, although their property was often plundered, their religion insulted, and their blood wantonly shed. Divine Providence at last, in its abundant mercy, stirred up the English nation to break the yoke of those tyrants, and to receive the oppressed Natives of Bengal under its protection. Having made Calcutta the capital of their dominions, the English distinguished this city by such peculiar marks of favour, as a free people would be expected to bestow, in establishing an English Court of Judicature, and granting to all within its jurisdiction, the same civil rights as every Briton enjoys in his native country ; thus putting the Natives of India in possession of such privileges as their forefathers never expected to attain, even under Hindoo Rulers. Considering these things and bearing in mind also the solicitude for the welfare of this country, uniformly expressed by the Honourable East India Company, under whose immediate controul we are placed, and also by the Supreme Councils of the British nation, your dutiful subjects consequently have not viewed the English as a body of conquerors, but rather as deliverers, and look up to your Majesty not only as a Ruler, but also as a father and protector.

4th. Since the establishment of the Supreme Court of Judicature in Calcutta till the present time, a period that has been distinguished by every variety of circumstances, the country sometimes reposing in the bosom of profound peace, at others shaken with the din of arms—the local Government of Bengal, although composed from time to time, of men of every shade of character and opinion, never attempted of its own will and pleasure to take away any of the rights which your Majesty's royal ancestors with the consent of their Councils, had been

graciously pleased to confer on your faithful subjects. Under the cheering influence of equitable and indulgent treatment, and stimulated by the example of a people famed for their wisdom and liberality, the Natives of India, with the means of amelioration set before them, have been gradually advancing in social and intellectual improvement. In their conduct and in their writings, whether periodical or otherwise, they have never failed to manifest all becoming respect to a Government fraught with such blessings; of which their own publications and the judgment passed upon them by the works of their contemporaries, are the best proofs. Your faithful subjects beg leave in support of this statement to submit two extracts from English works very lately published, one by a Native of India, and the other by English Missionaries; the first is from a work published on the 30th of January last, by Rammohun Roy, entitled "a Final Appeal to the Christian Public," which may serve as a specimen of the sentiments expressed by the Natives of India towards the Government.

"I now conclude my Essay in offering up thanks to the Supreme Disposer of the universe, for having unexpectedly delivered this country, from the long continued tyranny of its former Rulers, and placed it under the Government of the English, a nation who not only are blessed with the enjoyment of civil and political liberty, but also interest themselves, in promoting liberty and social happiness, as well as free inquiry into literary and religious subjects, among those nations to which their influence extends."—Pages 378, 379.

5th. The second extract is from a periodical work published at the Danish settlement of Serampore, by a body of English Missionaries, who are known to be generally the best qualified and the most careful observers of the foreign countries in which Europeans have settled. This work, entitled the "FRIEND OF INDIA," treating of the Native Newspapers published in Bengal, thus observes, "How necessary a step this (the establishment of a Native Press,) was for the amelioration of the condition

of the Natives, no person can be ignorant who has traced the effects of the Press in other countries. The Natives themselves soon availed themselves of this privilege; no less than four Weekly Newspapers in the Native language have now been established, and there are hopes, that these efforts will contribute essentially to arouse the Native mind from its long lethargy of death; and while it excites them to inquire into what is going forward in a world, of which Asia forms so important a portion, urge them to ascertain their own situation respecting that eternal world, which really communicates all the vigour and interest now so visible in Europeans. *Nor has this liberty been abused by them in the least degree*; yet these vehicles of intelligence have begun to be called for, from the very extremities of British India, and the talents of the Natives themselves, have not unfrequently been exerted in the production of Essays, that would have done credit to our own countrymen.”—(*Friend of India*, quarterly series, No. VII. published in December 1822.)

6th. An English gentleman, of the name of Buckingham, who for some years published a Newspaper in this place, entitled the “CALCUTTA JOURNAL,” having incurred the displeasure of the local Government, was ordered to leave this country, and soon afterwards, the Hon’ble John Adam, the Governor General in Council, suddenly without any previous intimation of his intentions, passed a Rule and Ordinance, on the 14th of March, thus taking away the liberty of the Press, which your Majesty’s faithful subjects had so long and so happily enjoyed, and substituting his own will and pleasure for the Laws of England, by which it had hitherto been governed. (This Rule, Ordinance, and Regulation is annexed : *vide* Paper annexed No. 1.)\*

7th. It being necessary according to the system established for the Government of this country that the above Regulation should receive the approbation of the Supreme Court by being registered there, after having been fixed up for 20 days on the walls of the Court-room, before it could become

\* These annexed papers have not been published as unnecessary.—ED.

Law, on the following Monday, (the 17th of March,) Mr. Fergusson, Barrister, moved the Court to allow parties who might feel themselves aggrieved by the New Regulation, to be heard against it by their Counsel before the sanction of the Court should establish it as Law, and the Honourable Sir Francis Macnaghten, the sole acting Judge, expressed his willingness to hear in this manner, all that could be urged against it, and appointed Monday the 31st of the same month of March, for Counsel to be heard. His Lordship also kindly suggested, that in the mean time, he thought it would be advisable to present a Memorial to Government, praying for the withdrawal of the said Rule and Ordinance. These observations from the Honourable Sir Francis Macnaghten, inspired your Majesty's faithful subjects at this Presidency, with a confident hope, that his Lordship disapproved of the Rule and Ordinance, and would use his influence with Government to second the prayer of the Memorial he recommended to be presented, or that at least in virtue of the authority vested in him for the purpose of protecting your faithful subjects against illegal and oppressive acts, he would prevent the proposed Rule from passing into Law.

8th. Your faithful subjects agreeable to a suggestion of this nature, proceeding from such a source, employed the few days intervening, in preparing a Memorial to Government, containing a respectful representation of the reasons which existed against the proposed Rule and Ordinance being passed into Law ; but in preparing this Memorial in both the English and Bengallee Languages, and discussing the alterations suggested by the different individuals who wished to give it their support and signature, so much time was necessarily consumed, that it was not ready to be sent into circulation for signature until the 30th of March ; consequently only fifteen Natives of respectability had time to read it over and affix their signature before the following day on which it was to be discussed in the Supreme Court and finally sanctioned or rejected. Besides that this number was considered insufficient, it was then too late for



Government to act upon this Memorial, so as to supersede the discussions and decision that were to take place in the Court, and a few individuals, therefore, of those who concurred in it, hastily prepared another Memorial of the same tenor in the morning of that day, addressed to the Supreme Court itself, demonstrating our unshaken attachment to the British Government, and praying the Court to withhold its sanction from a Regulation which would deprive us of an invaluable privilege, firmly secured to us by Laws of the Land, which we had so long enjoyed and could not be charged with ever having abused. (Annexed paper No. 2.) And although from these circumstances, the Memorial had still fewer signatures, your Majesty's faithful subjects reposed in the hope, that in appealing to a British Court of Law they might rely more on the justice of their cause, than the number or weight of names, especially, since it is well known, that there are many under the immediate influence of Government, who would not express an opinion against the acts of those in power at the time, although it were to secure the salvation of all their countrymen.

9th. This Memorial being, by the order of the Judge, read by the Registrar of the Court, Mr. Fergusson, (who besides his professional skill and eminence as an English Lawyer, has acquired by his long practice at the Calcutta Bar, a very intimate acquaintance with the state of this Country) in virtue of the permission granted him, entered into an argument, shewing the Rule and Ordinance to be both illegal and inexpedient. (The grounds on which he opposed it are given at length, annexed paper No. 3.)

10th. These and other conclusive arguments, urged by Mr. Fergusson, and also by Mr. Turton, both eminently skilled in the Laws of England, powerfully strengthened the hopes previously created by the observations that formerly fell from the Bench, that the learned Judge would enter his protest against such a direct violation of the Laws, and uncalled for invasion of the rights of your faithful subjects.

11th. Notwithstanding, we observed with astonishment and regret, that his Lordship, in giving his decision, paid no regard whatever to the above Memorial, not alluding to it in the most distant manner, nor to the arguments it contained ; and his Lordship further disclosed, that at the time he expressed a desire to hear every objection that could be urged, and recommended a Memorial to Government against it, from which your faithful subjects unanimously hoped that the mind of the Judge was undecided, and rather unfavourable to the Rule, his Lordship had previously pledged himself by promise to Government to give it his sanction. (Annexed paper No. 4, containing the speech made by Sir Francis Macnaghten, the Judge who presided on the occasion.)

12th. Your Majesty's faithful subjects cannot account for the inconsistency manifested by Sir F. Macnaghten in two different points with regard to the sanctioning of this Regulation. In the first place, according to his Lordship's own statement from the Bench, he refused not only once, but twice, to see the Regulation before it passed in Council, probably because his Lordship thought it improper for him to give it his approbation until it came before him in the regular manner ; but he afterwards, when application was made to him a third time, not only consented to read it, but with some alterations agreed to give it his sanction, a change of conduct for which no reason was assigned by his Lordship. Again, when application was made to his Lordship to hear the objections that might be urged against it, before giving it his Judicial approval, his Lordship withheld from the knowledge of the public, not only that he had already so pledged himself ; but even that he had previously seen the Regulation, and expressed himself ready to hear all that could be said respecting it, in the same manner as if his mind had been unfettered by any promise, and perfectly open to conviction. Consequently, some of your Majesty's faithful subjects prepared a Memorial and retained Counsel against the new Regulation, and had afterwards the mortification to find, that their repre-

sentations were treated with contemptuous neglect, and that the arguments of the most able Lawyers could be of no avail.

13th. Your Majesty in Parliament has been graciously pleased to make it a part of the Law of this Country, that after a Regulation has passed the Council, it must be fixed up for twenty days in the Supreme Court, before it can be registered, so as to receive the full force of Law, an interval which allows the Judge time for deliberation and to hear from others all the objections that may exist to the proposed measure, and might have the effect of preventing the establishment of injudicious and inexpedient or unjust and oppressive acts ; but if, as in this case, the Judges enter into a previous compact with the local Government, and thus preclude the possibility of any effectual representation from your faithful subjects, who have no intimation of what is meditated till it be finally resolved upon, the salutary effect of twenty days' delay is lost, and your faithful subjects will be in constant apprehension, that the most valuable and sacred of their rights may, as in this instance, be suddenly snatched from them at a moment's warning, before they know that such a measure is in contemplation, or have time to represent the evils which it is calculated to inflict upon them.

14th. In pursuance of the Regulation passed as above described, the Government issued an official order in the "GOVERNMENT GAZETTE" of the 5th of April, commanding the attention of Editors of Newspapers, or other periodical works, to certain restrictions therein contained, prohibiting all matters which it might consider as coming under the following heads :

(1st.) Defamatory or contumelious reflections against the King, or any of the Members of the Royal Family.

(2nd.) Observations or statements touching the character, constitution, measures, or orders of the Court of Directors, or other public authorities in England, connected with the Government of India, or the character, constitution, measures, or orders of the Indian Governments, impugning the motives and designs of such authorities of Governments, or in any way tending to

bring them into hatred or contempt, to excite resistance to their orders, and to weaken their authority.

(3rd.) Observations or statements of the above description, relative to, allied, or friendly Native Powers, their Ministers, or Representatives.

(4th.) Defamatory or contumelious remarks or offensive insinuations levelled against the Governor General, the Governors or Commanders-in-Chief, the Members of Council, or the Judges of His Majesty's Courts at any of the Presidencies, or the Bishop of Calcutta, and publications of any description, tending to expose them to hatred, obloquy or contempt, also libellous or abusive reflections and insinuations against the Public Officers of Government.

(5th.) Discussions having a tendency to create alarm or suspicion among the native population of any intended official interference with their religious opinions and observances, and irritating and insulting remarks on their peculiar usages and modes of thinking on religious subjects.

(6th.) The republication from English, or other papers, of passages coming under the foregoing heads.

(7th.) Defamatory publications tending to disturb the peace, harmony, and good order of society.

(8th.) Anonymous appeals to the Public, relative to grievances of professional or official nature, alleged to have been sustained by public officers in the service of His Majesty or the Honourable Company.

This Copy of the Restrictions will be authenticated by the annexed Copy, (No. 5.)

15th. The above Restrictions, as they are capable of being interpreted, will in fact afford Government and all its Functionaries from the highest to the lowest, complete immunity from censure or exposure respecting any thing done by them in their official capacity, however desirable it might be for the interest of this Country, and also that of the Honourable Company, that the public conduct of such public men should not be allowed to

pass unnoticed. It can scarcely be doubted that the real object of these Restrictions is, to afford all the Functionaries of Government complete security against their conduct being made the subject of observation, though it is associated with a number of other restraints totally uncalled for, but well calculated to soothe the supreme authorities in England and win their assent to the main object of the Rule—the suppression of public remark on the conduct of the public Officers of Government in India.

16th. Your Majesty's faithful subjects could have surely no inducement in this distant quarter of the world to make contumelious and injurious reflections on your Majesty or any of the members of your Majesty's illustrious family, or to circulate them among people to whom your Majesty's name is scarcely known, and to the greatest part of whom, even the fame of your greatness and power has not reached ; but to those few Natives who are possessed of sufficient information to understand the political situation of England, the English Newspapers and Books which are constantly brought to this country in great abundance, are equally intelligible with the periodical publications printed in Calcutta.

17th. Neither can your Majesty's faithful subjects have any wish to make remarks on the proceedings of the Court of Directors, of whose beneficent intentions they are well convinced, but that the Honourable Body who have so often manifested their earnest desire to ameliorate the condition of their Indian dependents, must be naturally anxious to be made exactly acquainted with the manner in which their wishes are carried into execution, and the operation and effect of the acts passed relative to this country.

18th. Whoever shall maliciously publish what has a tendency to bring the Government into hatred and contempt, or excite resistance to its orders, or weaken their authority, may be punished by Law as guilty of treason or sedition ; and surely in a country enjoying profound peace externally and internally, and where seditious and treasonable publications are unknown, it

could not be necessary for Government to throw aside of a sudden, the Laws which for any thing that has appeared, were fully sufficient, and arm itself with new and extraordinary powers at a time when that Government is more secure than at any former period.

19th. It may surely be left for British Judges and Juries to determine whether the mention made of the proceedings of Government, be malevolent, seditious and dangerous to the estate, so as to render a writer or publisher culpable and amenable to punishment ; but if the mere mention of the conduct of Government without misrepresentation or malice on the part of the writer, bring it into hatred and contempt, such conduct will never receive the countenance or protection of your Majesty by the sanction of a Law to prevent its exposure to public observation, and the discovery of that dissatisfaction it may have occasioned, which would afford the higher authorities an opportunity of removing them.

20th. After a body of English Missionaries have been labouring for about twenty-five years by preaching and distributing publications in the native languages in all parts of Bengal, to bring the prevailing system of religion into disrepute, no alarm whatever prevails, because your Majesty's faithful subjects possess the power of defending their Religion by the same means that are employed against it, and many of them have exercised the freedom of the Press to combat the writings of English missionaries, and think no other protection necessary to the maintenance of their faith. While the Teachers of Christianity use only reason and persuasion to propagate their Religion, your Majesty's faithful subjects are content to defend theirs by the same weapons, convinced that true Religion needs not the aid of the sword or of legal penalties for its protection. While your Majesty's faithful subjects perceived that Government shewed no displeasure, and claimed no arbitrary power of preventing the publication of what was written in defence of the prevailing religion of the country, it was impossible to entertain

any such suspicion as that intimated in the 5th article, viz. that Government would interfere with the established faith of the natives of this country. Nevertheless, if any person with a malicious and seditious design were to circulate an unfounded rumour that Government meant so to interfere with our religious privileges, he would be severely punished by law : but if the Government really intended to adopt measures to change the religion of the country, your Majesty's faithful subjects would be absolutely prohibited by the present Restrictions from intimating the appalling intelligence to their countrymen : and although they have every reason to hope that the English nation will never abandon that religious toleration which has distinguished their progress in the East, it is impossible to foresee to what purposes of religious oppression such a Law might at some future time be applied.

21st. The office of the Lord Bishop of Calcutta not calling him to preach Christianity in that part of the town inhabited by the natives, or to circulate Pamphlets among them against the established Religion of the Country, but being of a nature totally distinct, and not at all interfering with the religious opinion of the native population, they could never dream of vilifying and defaming his character or office.

22nd. The Judges of the Supreme Court in Calcutta and of the English Courts of Judicature at the other Presidencies, enjoy, in virtue of their office, the power of protecting their characters and official conduct from defamation and abuse : since such would be either a contempt of the Court, liable to summary punishment, or punishable by those Laws enacted against libel. It is therefore hard to be conceived, that they stand in need of still further protection, unless it should be wished thereby to create an idea of their infallibility, which however is incompatible with the freedom allowed to Barristers, of delivering their sentiments before hand on the justice or injustice of the opinions the Judges may pronounce, and in case of appeal; of controverting the justice and equity of their

decision. The only object such a restriction is calculated to attain, must therefore be defeated, unless it be meant thereby to prevent the publication of the pleadings which as they take place in an English Court of Judicature are by Law public, and ought to be accessible to all.

23rd. The seventh restriction prohibiting defamatory publications tending to disturb the peace, harmony, and good order of Society, is equally unnecessary, since the British Legislature has already provided a punishment for such offences by the Laws enacted against libel.

24th. Your Majesty's faithful subjects will not offer any more particular remarks on the superfluous Restrictions introduced to accompany those more important ones which are the principal object of Government, and will conclude with this general observation, that they are unnecessary, either because the offences prohibited are imaginary and improbable, or because they are already provided for by the Laws of the Land, and either the Government does not intend to put them in force at all, or it is anxious to interrupt the regular course of justice, abolish the right of Trial by Jury, and, by taking the Law into its own hands, to combine the Legislative and Judicial power, which is destructive of all Civil Liberty.

25th. Your Majesty's faithful subjects have heard, that your Majesty constantly submits to the greatest freedom of remark among your British born subjects without losing any part of the homage and respect due to your exalted character and station, and that the conduct of your Ministers is constantly the topic of discussion, without destroying the dignity and power of the Government. While such is the case in a country where it is said above nine-tenths of the Inhabitants read newspapers, and are therefore liable to be led by the opinions circulated through the Press, its capability of bringing a Government into hatred and contempt must be far less in a country where the great mass of the population do not read at all, and have the greatest reverence for men in power, of



whom they can only judge by what they feel, and are not to be moved by what is written, but by what is done, where consequently Government can only be brought into hatred and contempt by its own acts.

26th. The Marquis of Hastings, who had associated for the greater part of his life, with Kings and Princes, entertained no apprehension that the salutary control of public scrutiny which he commended, would bring him or his Indian administration into hatred and contempt ; and in effect, instead of such being the result, the greater the freedom he allowed to the European conductors of the Press, only rendered his name the most honored and revered in this part of the world, because it was universally believed, that his conduct proceeded from a consciousness of rectitude which feared no investigation.

27th. But your faithful subjects might forbear urging further arguments on this subject to your Majesty, who with your actions open to observation, possess the love, the esteem, and the respect of mankind, in a degree which none of the despotic Monarchs of Europe or of Asia can ever attain, whose subjects are prohibited from examining and expressing their opinions regarding their conduct.

28th. Asia unfortunately affords few instances of Princes who have submitted their actions to the judgment of their subjects, but those who have done so, instead of falling into hatred and contempt, were the more loved and respected, while they lived, and their memory is still cherished by posterity ; whereas more despotic Monarchs, pursued by hatred in their life time, could with difficulty escape the attempts of the rebel or the assassin, and their names are either detested or forgotten.

29th. The idea of the possession of absolute power and perfection, is evidently not necessary to the stability of the British Government of India, since your Majesty's faithful subjects are accustomed to see private individuals citing the Government before the Supreme Court, where the justice of their acts is fearlessly impugned, and after the necessary

evidence being produced and due investigation made, judgment not unfrequently given against the Government, the judge not feeling himself restrained from passing just sentence by any fear of the Government being thereby brought into contempt. And your Majesty's faithful subjects only pray, that it may be permitted by means of the Press or by some other means equally effectual, to bring forward evidence regarding the acts of Government which affect the general interest of the community, that they also may be investigated and reversed, when those who have the power of doing so, become convinced that they are improper or injurious.

30th. A Government conscious of rectitude of intention, cannot be afraid of public scrutiny by means of the Press, since this instrument can be equally well employed as a weapon of defence, and a Government possessed of immense patronage, is more especially secure, since the greater part of the learning and talent in the country being already enlisted in the service, its actions, if they have any shadow of Justice, are sure of being ably and successfully defended.

31st. Men in power hostile to the Liberty of the Press, which is a disagreeable check upon their conduct, when unable to discover any real evil arising from its existence, have attempted to make the world imagine, that it might, in some possible contingency, afford the means of combination against the Government, but not to mention that extraordinary emergencies would warrant measures which in ordinary times are totally unjustifiable, your Majesty is well aware, that a Free Press has never yet caused a revolution in any part of the world, because, while men can easily represent the grievances arising from the conduct of the local authorities to the supreme Government, and thus get them redressed, the grounds of discontent that excite revolution are removed ; whereas, where no freedom of the Press existed, and grievances consequently remained unrepresented and unredressed, innumerable revolutions have taken place in all parts of the globe, or if prevented

by the armed force of the Government, the people continued ready for insurrection.

32nd. The servants of the Honourable Company are necessarily firmly attached to that system from which they derive their consequence and power, and on which their hopes of higher honours and still greater emoluments depend ; and if it be possible to imagine, that these strong considerations are not sufficient to preserve subordination among them, the power of suspension and ruin which hangs over their heads for any deviation from duty, is certainly sufficient to secure that object.

33rd. After the British Government has existed for so many years, it has acquired a certain standard character in the minds of the natives of India, from the many excellent men who have from time to time held the reins of power, and the principles by which they have been guided. Whatever opinion therefore, may be entertained of the individuals composing it at a particular period, while the source of power remains the same, your Majesty's faithful subjects cannot of a sudden lose confidence in the virtue of the stream, since although it may for a period be tainted with corruption, yet in the natural course of events it must soon resume its accustomed character. Should individuals abuse the power entrusted to them, public resentment cannot be transferred from the delinquents to the Government itself, while there is a prospect of remedy from the higher authorities ; and should the highest in this country turn a deaf ear to all complaint, by forbidding grievances to be even mentioned, the spirit of loyalty is still kept alive by the hope of redress from the authorities in England ; thus the attachment of the Natives of India, to the British Government must be as permanent as their confidence in the honour and Justice of the British nation, which is their last Court of Appeal next to Heaven. But if they be prevented from making their real condition known in England, deprived of this hope of redress, they will consider the most peculiar excellence of the British Government of India, as done away.

34th. If these conclusions drawn from the particular circumstances of this country, be met with such an argument as that a colony or distant dependency can never safely be entrusted with the Liberty of the Press, and that therefore Natives of Bengal cannot be allowed to exercise the privileges they have so long enjoyed, this would be in other words to tell them, that they are condemned to perpetual oppression and degradation, from which they can have no hope of being raised during the existence of the British Power.

35th. The British nation has never yet descended to avow a principle so foreign to their character, and if they could for a moment entertain the idea of preserving their power by keeping their colonies in ignorance, the prohibition of periodical publications is not enough, but printing of all kinds, education, and every other means of diffusing knowledge should be equally discouraged and put down. For it must be the distant consequences of the diffusion of knowledge that are dreaded by those (if there be any such) who are really apprehensive for the stability of Government, since it is well known to all in the least acquainted with this country, that although every effort were made by periodical as well as other publications, a great number of years must elapse before any considerable change can be made in the existing habits and opinions of the Natives of India, so firmly are they wedded to established custom. Should apprehensions so unworthy of the English nation prevail, then, unlike the ancient Romans who extended their knowledge and civilization with their conquests, ignorance and degradation must mark the extent of British Power. Yet surely even this, affords no hope of perpetual Rule, since notwithstanding the tyranny and oppression of Gengis Khan and Tamerlane, their empire was not so lasting as that of the Romans, who to the proud title of conquerors, added the more glorious one of Enlighteners of the World. And of the two most renowned and powerful monarchs among the Moguls, Ukbar was celebrated for his clemency, for his encouragement of learning, and for granting civil and religi-

ous liberty to his subjects, and Arungzebe, for his cruelty and intolerance, yet the former reigned happy, extended his power and his dominions, and his memory is still adored, whereas the other, though endowed with equal abilities and possessed of equal power and enterprize, met with many reverses and misfortunes during his life time, and his name is now held in abhorrence.

36th. It is well known that despotic Governments naturally desire the suppression of any freedom of expression which might tend to expose their acts to the obloquy which ever attends the exercise of tyranny or oppression, and the argument they constantly resort to, is, that the spread of knowledge is dangerous to the existence of all legitimate authority, since, as a people become enlightened, they will discover that by a unity of effort, the many may easily shake off the yoke of the few, and thus become emancipated from the restraints of power altogether, forgetting the lesson derived from history, that in countries which have made the smallest advances in civilization, anarchy and revolution are most prevalent—while on the other hand, in nations the most enlightened, any revolt against governments which have guarded inviolate the rights of the governed, is most rare, and that the resistance of a people advanced in knowledge, has ever been—not against the existence,—but against the abuses of the Governing power. Canada, during the late war with America, afforded a memorable instance of the truth of this argument. The enlightened inhabitants of that colony, finding that their rights and privileges had been secured to them, their complaints listened to, and their grievances redressed by the British government, resisted every attempt of the United States to seduce them from their allegiance to it. In fact, it may be fearlessly averred, that the more enlightened a people become, the less likely they are to revolt against the governing power, as long as it is exercised with justice tempered with mercy, and the rights and privileges of the governed are held sacred from any invasion.

37th. If your Majesty's faithful subjects could conceive for a moment, that the British nation actuated solely by interested policy, considered India merely as a valuable property, and would regard nothing but the best means of securing its possession and turning it to advantage, even then, it would be of importance to ascertain whether this property be well taken care of by their servants, on the same principle that good masters are not indifferent about the treatment of their slaves.

38th. While therefore the existence of a free Press is equally necessary for the sake of the Governors and the governed, it is possible a national feeling may lead the British people to suppose, that in two points, the peculiar situation of this country requires a modification of the laws enacted for the controul of the Press in England. First, that for the sake of greater security and to preserve the union existing between England and this country, it might be necessary to enact a penalty to be inflicted on such persons as might endeavour to excite hatred in the minds of the Natives of India against the English nation. Secondly, that a penalty should be inflicted on such as might seditiously attempt to excite hostilities with neighbouring or friendly states. Although your Majesty's faithful subjects are not aware that any thing has yet occurred to call for the precautions thus anticipated, yet should such or any other limitations of the liberty of the Press be deemed necessary, they are perfectly willing to submit to additional penalties to be legally inflicted. But they must humbly enter their protest against the injustice of robbing them of their long standing privileges, by the introduction of numerous arbitray restrictions, totally uncalled for by the circumstances of the country—and whatever may be their intention, calculated to suppress truth, protect abuses—and encourage oppression.

39th. Your Majesty's faithful subjects now beg leave to call your Majesty's attention to some peculiarly injurious consequences of the new laws that have thus been suddenly introduced in the manner above described. First, the above Rule and

Ordinance has deprived your Majesty's faithful subjects of the liberty of the Press, which they had enjoyed for so many years since the establishment of the British Rule. Secondly, your Majesty's faithful subjects are deprived of the protection of your Majesty and the high council of the British nation, who have hitherto exclusively exercised the legislative power in this part of your Majesty's dominions.

40th. If upon representations being made by the local authorities in the country, your Majesty after due investigation had been pleased with the advice of the high council of the realm to order the abolition of the liberty of the Press in India, your Majesty's faithful subjects from the feeling of respect and loyalty due to the supreme legislative power, would have patiently submitted, since although they would in that case, still have lost one of their most precious privileges, yet their claim to the superintendence and protection of the highest legislative authority, in whom your faithful subjects have unbounded confidence, would still have remained unshaken; but were this Rule and Ordinance of the local Government to be held valid, and thus remain as a precedent for similar proceedings in future, your faithful subjects would find their hope of protection from the Supreme Government, cut off, and all their civil and religious rights placed entirely at the mercy of such individuals as may be sent from England to assume the executive authority in this country, or rise into power through the routine of office, and who from long officiating in an inferior station, may have contracted prejudices against individuals or classes of men, which ought not to find shelter in the breast of the Legislator.

41st. As it never has been imagined, or surmised in this country, that the Government was in any immediate danger from the operation of the native Press, it cannot be pretended, that the public safety required strong measures to be instantly adopted, and that consequently there was not sufficient time to make a representation to the authorities in England, and wait

for their decision, or that it was incumbent on the highest Judicial authority in India, to sanction an act so repugnant to the laws of England, which he has sworn to maintain inviolate.

42nd. If as your Majesty's faithful subjects have been informed, this Government were dissatisfied with the conduct of the English newspaper, called the "Calcutta Journal," the banishment of the Editor of that paper, and the power of punishing those left by him to manage his concern, should they also give offence, might have satisfied the Government ; but at any rate your Majesty's faithful subjects, who are natives of this country, against whom there is not the shadow of a charge, are at a loss to understand the nature of that justice which punishes them, for the fault imputed to others. Yet notwithstanding what the local authorities of this country have done, your faithful subjects feel confident, that your Majesty will not suffer it to be believed throughout your Indian territories, that it is British justice to punish millions for the fault imputed to one individual.

43rd. The abolition of this most precious of their privileges, is the more appalling to your Majesty's faithful subjects, because it is a violent infringement of their civil and religious rights, which under the British Government, they hoped would be always secure. Your Majesty is aware, that under their former Mohammudan Rulers, the natives of this country enjoyed every political privilege in common with Mussulmans, being eligible to the highest offices in the state, entrusted with the command of armies and the government of provinces, and often chosen as advisers to their Prince, without disqualification or degrading distinction on account of their religion or the place of their birth. They used to receive free grants of land exempted from any payments of revenue, and besides the highest salaries allowed under the Government, they enjoyed free of charge, large tracts of country attached to certain offices of trust and dignity, while natives of learning and talent were rewarded with numerous situations of honour and emolument. Although



under the British Rule, the natives of India, have entirely lost this political consequence, your Majesty's faithful subjects were consoled by the more secure enjoyment of those civil and religious rights which had been so often violated by the rapacity and intolerance of the Mussulmans ; and notwithstanding the loss of political rank and power, they considered themselves much happier in the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty than were their ancestors : but if these rights that remain are allowed to be unceremoniously invaded, the most valuable of them being placed at the mercy of one or two individuals, the basis on which they have founded their hopes of comfort and happiness under the British Power, will be destroyed.

44th. Your Majesty has been pleased to place this part of your dominions under the immediate controul of the Court of Directors, and this Honourable Body have committed the entire management of this country (Calcutta excepted) to a number of gentlemen styled Civil Servants, usually under the superintendence of a Governor General. These gentlemen who are entrusted with the whole administration, consist of three classes ; First, subordinate local officers, such as Judges of Districts, Magistrates, Collectors and commercial agents ; Secondly, officers superior to them as Judges of Circuit, and Members of different Revenue and Commercial Boards, &c. Thirdly, those who fill the highest and most important offices, as Judges of the Sudder Dewany Adalat, Secretaries to Government, the Members of the Supreme Council, and sometimes a Civil Servant may rise to the highest office, of Governor General of India. In former times, native fathers were anxious to educate their children according to the usages of those days, in order to qualify them for such offices under government as they might reasonably hope to obtain ; and young men had the most powerful motives for sedulously cultivating their minds, in the laudable ambition of rising by their merits to an honourable rank in society ; whereas, under the present system, so trifling are the rewards held out to native talent, that hardly any stimulus to intellectual improvement remains ; yet, your

Majesty's faithful subjects felt confident, that notwithstanding these unfavourable circumstances, the natives of India would not sink into absolute mental lethargy while allowed to aspire to distinction in the world of letters, and to exercise the liberty of the Press for their moral and intellectual improvement, which are far more valuable than the acquisition of riches or any other temporal advantages under arbitrary power.

45th. Those gentlemen propose and enact laws for the Government of the extensive territory under their controul, and also administer these laws ; collect revenue of all sorts, and superintend manufactories carried on in behalf of the state ; and they have introduced according to their judgment, certain judicial, commercial, and revenue systems, to which it may be supposed they are partial, as being their own, and therefore support them with their whole influence and abilities as of the most efficient and salutary character. It is also the established custom of these gentlemen to transmit official reports from time to time, to the Court of Directors, to make them acquainted with the mode in which the country is governed, and the happiness enjoyed by the people of this vast empire, from the manner in which the laws are administered.

46th. Granting that those gentlemen were almost infallible in their judgment and their systems nearly perfect ; yet your Majesty's faithful subjects may be allowed to presume, that the paternal anxiety which the Court of Directors have often expressed for the welfare of the many millions dependent upon them in a country situated at the distance of several thousand miles, would suggest to them the propriety of establishing some other means besides, to ascertain whether the systems introduced in their Indian possessions, prove so beneficial to the natives of this country, as their authors might fondly suppose or would have others believe, and whether the Rules and Regulations which may appear excellent in their eyes, are strictly put in practice.

47th. Your Majesty's faithful subjects are aware of no means by which impartial information on these subjects can be

obtained by the Court of Directors or other authorities in England, except in one of the two following modes : either, first, by the existence of a Free Press in this country and the Establishment of Newspapers in the different Districts under the special patronage of the Court of Directors and subject to the controul of law only, or secondly by the appointment of a commission composed of Gentlemen of intelligence and respectability, totally unconnected with the Governing Body in this country, which may from time to time, investigate on the spot, the condition of your Majesty's faithful subjects, and judge with their own eyes regarding the operation of the systems of law and jurisprudence under which they live.

48th. But the immense labour required for surveying a country of such extent, and the great expense that would be necessary to induce men of such reputation and ability as manifestly to qualify them for the important task, to undertake a work of such difficulty, which must be frequently repeated, present great, if not insuperable obstacles to the introduction or efficacy of the latter mode of proceeding by commission ; from which your Majesty's faithful subjects therefore, do not entertain any sanguine expectations ; unless your Majesty influenced by humane considerations for the welfare of your subjects, were graciously pleased to enjoin its adoption from a conviction of its expediency whatever might be the expense attending it.

49th. The publication of truth and the natural expression of men's sentiments through the medium of the Press, entail no burden on the State, and should it appear to your Majesty and the enlightened men placed about your throne, that this precious privilege which is so essential to the well being of your faithful subjects, could not safely be entrusted to the Natives of India, although they have given such unquestionable proofs of their loyalty and attachment, subject only to the restraints wisely imposed upon the Press by the laws of England, your faithful subjects intreat on behalf of their countrymen, that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to grant it, subject to such

severer restraints and heavier penalties as may be deemed necessary ; but legal restraints, not those of arbitrary power—and penalties to be inflicted after trial and conviction according to the forms of the Laws of England,—not at the will and pleasure of one or two individuals without investigation or without hearing any defence or going through any of the forms prescribed by law, to ensure the equitable administration of justice.

50th. Notwithstanding the despotic power of the Mogul Princes who formerly ruled over this country, and that their conduct was often cruel and arbitrary, yet the wise and virtuous among them, always employed two intelligencers at the residence of their Nawabs or Lord Lieutenants, an *Ukhbar-nuvees*, or news-writer who published an account of whatever happened, and a *Khoofeanuvees*, or confidential correspondent, who sent a private and particular account of every occurrence worthy of notice ; and although these Lord Lieutenants were often particular friends or near relations to the Prince, he did not trust entirely to themselves for a faithful and impartial report of their administration, and degraded them when they appeared to deserve it, either for their own faults or for their negligence in not checking the delinquencies of their subordinate officers ; which shews, that even the Mogul Princes, although their form of Government admitted of nothing better, were convinced, that in a country so rich and so replete with temptations, a restraint of some kind was absolutely necessary, to prevent the abuses that are so liable to flow from the possession of power.

51st. The country still abounds in wealth, and its inhabitants are still addicted to the same corrupt means of compassing their ends, to which from having long lived under arbitrary Government, they have become naturally habituated and if its present Rulers have brought with them purer principles from the land of their birth which may better withstand the influence of long residence amid the numerous temptations to which they are exposed ;—on the other hand, from the seat of the Supreme Government being placed at an immense distance and the

channel of communication entirely in their own hands, they are left more at liberty to follow their own interests, and looking forward to the quiet and secure enjoyment of their wealth in their native land, they may care little for the character they leave behind them in a remote country, among a people for whose opinion they have no regard. Your Majesty's faithful subjects therefore, humbly presume, that the existence of a restraint of some kind, is absolutely necessary to preserve your faithful subjects from the abuses of uncontrouled power.

52nd. That your Majesty may be convinced, that your faithful subjects do not allude merely to possible abuses, or point out only theoretical defects in established systems, they beg leave to call your Majesty's attention to the observations contained in a Number of a most respectable Baptist Missionary work, the accuracy of which, although it has now been two years\* in circulation, in all parts of India, not one of the numerous civil servants of the Honourable Company, has ventured to dispute nor have the flagrant abuses it points out, been remedied.

53rd. It might be urged on the other hand, that persons who feel aggrieved, may transmit representations to the Court of Directors, and thus obtain redress ; but the natives of this country are generally ignorant of this mode of proceeding ; and with neither friends in England nor knowledge of the country, they could entertain no hope of success, since they know that the transmission of their representations, depends in point of time, upon the pleasure of the local Government, which will probably, in order to counteract their influence, accompany them with observations, the nature of which would be totally unknown to the complainants,—discouragements which in fact have operated as complete preventives, so that no instance of such a representation from the Natives of Bengal, has ever been known.

54th. In conclusion, your Majesty's faithful subjects humbly beseech your Majesty, first, to cause the Rule and Ordinance and Regulation before mentioned, which has been registered by

\* No IV. Quarterly series of the Friend of India, published in Dec. 1821.

the Judge of your Majesty's Court, to be rescinded ; and to prohibit any authority in this country, from assuming the legislative power, or prerogatives of your Majesty and the High Council of the Realm, to narrow the privileges and destroy the rights of your Majesty's faithful subjects, who claim your protection, and are willing to submit to such laws, as your Majesty with the advice of your Council, shall be graciously pleased to enact.

Secondly, your Majesty's faithful subjects humbly pray, that your Majesty will be pleased to confirm to them the privilege, they have so long enjoyed, of expressing their sentiments through the medium of the Press, subject to such legal restraints as may be thought necessary, or that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to appoint a commission of intelligent and independent Gentlemen, to inquire into the real condition of the millions Providence has placed under your high protection.

55th. Your Majesty's faithful subjects from the distance of almost half the globe, appeal to your Majesty's heart by the sympathy which forms a paternal tie between you and the lowest of your subjects, not to overlook their condition ; they appeal to you by the honour of that great nation which under your Royal auspices has obtained the glorious title of Liberator of Europe, not to permit the possibility of millions of your subjects being wantonly trampled on and oppressed ; they lastly appeal to you by the glory of your Crown on which the eyes of the world are fixed, not to consign the natives of India, to perpetual oppression and degradation.



**A LETTER**  
**ON**  
**ENGLISH EDUCATION.**

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**CALCUTTA :**

**1823.**





## A LETTER ON ENGLISH EDUCATION.\*

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD AMHERST,  
GOVERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL.

MY LORD,

Humbly reluctant as the natives of India are to obtrude upon the notice of Government the sentiments they entertain on any public measure, there are circumstances when silence would be carrying this respectful feeling to culpable excess. The present rulers of India, coming from a distance of many thousand miles to govern a people whose language, literature, manners, customs, and ideas, are almost entirely new and strange to them,

\* It is well known that among those persons who laboured for the spread of English Education in this country Raja Ram Mohun Roy was one of the foremost. The old Hindu College owed its origin to the exertions of Sir Edward Hyde East, David Hare, and Ram Mohun Roy. After the establishment of the Hindu College there began the celebrated controversy between the 'Orientalists,' i. e. persons who were for the encouragement of the study of the oriental languages and against the introduction of English Education, and the 'Anglicists,' i. e. the advocates of English Education, of whom Ram Mohun Roy was one of the most prominent. This controversy raged for some 12 years or more till it was ended by the Resolution of Lord William Bentinck, of the 7th May 1835. It was at the first stage of this controversy, when the Orientalists had induced the Government to sanction the establishment of a Sanscrit College, that the above letter was written, the object of it being to protest against the proposed measure. It was owing perhaps to this agitation that the foundation stone of the building, intended for the Sanscrit College, was laid in the name of the Hindu College (February 1824,) and the Hindu College was located there together with the Sanscrit College.—ED.

cannot easily become so intimately acquainted with their real circumstances as the natives of the country are themselves. We should therefore be guilty of a gross dereliction of duty to ourselves and afford our rulers just grounds of complaint at our apathy, did we omit on occasions of importance like the present, to supply them with such accurate information as might enable them to devise and adopt measures calculated to be beneficial to the country, and thus second by our local knowledge and experience their declared benevolent intentions for its improvement.

The establishment of a new Sanscrit School in Calcutta evinces the laudable desire of Government to improve the natives of India by education,—a blessing for which they must ever be grateful, and every well-wisher of the human race must be desirous that the efforts made to promote it, should be guided by the most enlightened principles, so that the stream of intelligence may flow in the most useful channels.

When this seminary of learning was proposed, we understood that the Government in England had ordered a considerable sum of money to be annually devoted to the instruction of its Indian subjects. We were filled with sanguine hopes that this sum would be laid out in employing European gentlemen of talent and education to instruct the natives of India in Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, and other useful sciences, which the natives of Europe have carried to a degree of perfection that has raised them above the inhabitants of other parts of the world.

While we looked forward with pleasing hope to the dawn of knowledge, thus promised to the rising generation, our hearts were filled with mingled feelings of delight and gratitude, we already offered up thanks to Providence for inspiring the most generous and enlightened nations of the West with the glorious ambition of planting in Asia the arts and sciences of Modern Europe.

We find that the Government are establishing a Sanscrit school under Hindu Pundits to impart such knowledge as is

already current in India. This seminary (similar in character to those which existed in Europe before the time of Lord Bacon) can only be expected to load the minds of youth with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions of little or no practical use to the possessors or to society. The pupils will there acquire what was known two thousand years ago with the addition of vain and empty subtleties since then produced by speculative men, such as is already commonly taught in all parts of India.

The Sanscrit language, so difficult that almost a life time is necessary for its acquisition, is well known to have been for ages a lamentable check to the diffusion of knowledge, and the learning concealed under this almost impervious veil, is far from sufficient to reward the labour of acquiring it. But if it were thought necessary to perpetuate this language for the sake of the portion of valuable information it contains, this might be much more easily accomplished by other means than the establishment of a new Sanscrit College, for there have been always and are now numerous professors of Sanscrit in the different parts of the country engaged in teaching this language, as well as the other branches of literature which are to be the object of the new seminary. Therefore their more diligent cultivation, if desirable, would be effectually promoted, by holding out premiums and granting certain allowances to their most eminent professors, who have already undertaken on their own account to teach them, and would by such rewards be stimulated to still greater exertion.

From these considerations, as the sum set apart for the instruction of the natives of India was intended by the Government in England for the improvement of its Indian subjects, I beg leave to state, with due deference to your Lordship's exalted situation, that if the plan now adopted be followed, it will completely defeat the object proposed, since no improvement can be expected from inducing young men to consume a dozen of years of the most valuable period of their lives, in acquiring

the niceties of Baikaran or Sanskrit Grammar, for instance, in learning to discuss such points as the following : *khada*, signifying to eat, *khadati* he or she or it eats, query, whether does *khadati* taken as a whole convey the meaning he, she or it eats, or are separate parts of this meaning conveyed by distinctions of the words, as if in the English language it were asked how much meaning is there in the *eat* and how much in the *s*, and is the whole meaning of the word conveyed by these two portions of it distinctly or by them taken jointly ?

Neither can much improvement arise from such speculations as the following which are the themes suggested by the Vedanta, —in what manner is the soul absorbed in the Deity ? What relation does it bear to the Divine Essence ? Nor will youths be fitted to be better members of society by the Vedantic doctrines which teach them to believe, that all visible things have no real existence, that as father, brother, &c. have no actual entity, they consequently deserve no real affection, and therefore the sooner we escape from them and leave the world the better.

Again, no essential benefit can be derived by the student of the *Mimansa* from knowing what it is that makes the killer of a goat sinless by pronouncing certain passages of the Vedanta and what is the real nature and operative influence of passages of the Vedas, &c.

The student of the Naya Shastra cannot be said to have improved his mind after he has learned from it into how many ideal classes the objects in the universe are divided and what speculative relation, the soul bears to the body, the body to the soul, the eye to the ear, &c.

In order to enable your Lordship to appreciate the utility of encouraging such imaginary learning as above characterized, I beg your Lordship will be pleased to compare the state of science and literature in Europe before the time of Lord Bacon with the progress of knowledge made since he wrote.

If it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge, the Baconian philosophy would not have

been allowed to displace the system of the schoolmen which was the best calculated to perpetuate ignorance. In the same manner the Sanscrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness, if such had been the policy of the British legislature. But as the improvement of the native population is the object of the Government, it will consequently promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful sciences, which may be accomplished with the sums proposed by employing a few gentlemen of talent and learning educated in Europe and providing a College furnished with necessary books, instruments, and other apparatus.

In presenting this subject to your Lordship, I conceive myself discharging a solemn duty which I owe to my countrymen, and also to that enlightened sovereign and legislature which have extended their benevolent care to this distant land, actuated by a desire to improve the inhabitants, and therefore humbly trust you will excuse the liberty I have taken in thus expressing my sentiments to your Lordship.

I have the honor &c.

RAMMOHUN ROY.



# **APPENDIX.**





## INTRODUCTION.\*

SEVERAL of my friends having expressed a wish to be possessed of copies of my Translation of the Veds, and Controversies with those Brahmuns who are advocates for idolatry, I have collected for republication such of those tracts as I could find, either among my own papers or those of my friends who happened to have brought them from India, and now offer them to the public in their original form.

I feel induced to set forth here, briefly, the substance of these writings, to facilitate the comprehension of their purport, as being foreign to the generality of European readers. The Veds (or properly speaking, the spiritual parts of them) uniformly declare, that man is prone by nature, or by habit, to reduce the object or objects of his veneration and worship (though admitted to be unknown) to tangible forms, ascribing to such objects attributes, supposed excellent according to his own notions ; whence idolatry, gross or refined, takes its origin, and perverts the true course of intellect to vain fancies. These authorities, therefore, hold out precautions against framing a deity after human imagination, and recommend mankind to direct all researches towards the surrounding objects, viewed either collectively or individually, bearing in mind their regular, wise and wonderful combinations and arrangements, since such researches cannot fail, they affirm, to lead an unbiassed mind to a notion of a Supreme Existence, who so sublimely designs and disposes of them, as is every where traced through the universe. The same Veds represent rites and external

\* This Introduction appears in the 'Translation of several principal Books, Passages, and Texts of the Veds, and of some controversial works on Brahmical Theology' which Ram Mohun Roy published in London in 1832, and from which many of the tracts contained in this volume have been reprinted.—ED.

worship addressed to the planets and elementary objects, or personified abstract notions, as well as to deified heroes, as intended for persons of mean capacity ; but enjoin spiritual devotion, as already described, benevolence, and self-control, as the only means of securing bliss.

RAMMOHUN ROY.

*London, July 23, 1832.*

P. S. In all the following Translations, except the Cena Upanishad, the mode of spelling Sanscrit words in English, adopted by Dr. J. B. Gilchrist, has been observed.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.\*

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MY DEAR FRIEND,

In conformity with the wish, you have frequently expressed, that I should give you an outline of my life, I have now the pleasure to give you the following very brief sketch.

My ancestors were Brahmins of a high order, and, from time immemorial, were devoted to the religious duties of their race, down to my fifth progenitor, who about one hundred and forty years ago gave up spiritual exercises for worldly pursuits and aggrandisement. His descendants ever since have followed his example, and, according to the usual fate of courtiers, with various success, sometimes rising to honour and sometimes falling ; sometimes rich and sometimes poor ; sometimes excelling in success, sometimes miserable through disappointment. But my maternal ancestors, being of the sacerdotal order by profession as well as by birth, and of a family than which none holds a higher rank in that profession, have up to the present day uniformly adhered to a life of religious observances and devotion, preferring peace and tranquility of mind to the excitements of ambition, and all the allurements of worldly grandeur.

In conformity with the usage of my paternal race, and the wish of my father, I studied the Persian and Arabic languages,—

\* Miss Carpenter thus introduced this Autobiographical Sketch into her book, 'Last days in England of Raja Ram Mohun Roy':—

"The following letter from Ram Mohun Roy himself first appeared in the 'Athenæum,' and in the 'Literary Gazette;' from one or other of which it was copied into various newspapers. It was written just before he went to France. It was probably designed for some distinguished person who had desired him to give an outline of his history ; and he adopted this form for the purpose. The letter may be considered as addressed to his friend Mr. Gordon, of Calcutta." —Ed.

these being indispensable to those who attached themselves to the courts of the Mahomedan princes ; and agreeably to the usage of my maternal relations, I devoted myself to the study of the Sanscrit and the theological works written in it, which contain the body of Hindoo literature, law and religion.

When about the age of sixteen, I composed a manuscript calling in question the validity of the idolatrous system of the Hindoos. This, together with my known sentiments on that subject, having produced a coolness between me and my immediate kindred, I proceeded on my travels, and passed through different countries, chiefly within, but some beyond, the bounds of Hindoostan, with a feeling of great aversion to the establishment of the British power in India. When I had reached the age of twenty, my father recalled me, and restored me to his favour ; after which I first saw and began to associate with Europeans, and soon after made myself tolerably acquainted with their laws and form of government. Finding them generally more intelligent, more steady and moderate in their conduct, I gave up my prejudice against them, and became inclined in their favour, feeling persuaded that their rule, though a foreign yoke, would lead more speedily and surely to the amelioration of the native inhabitants ; and I enjoyed the confidence of several of them even in their public capacity. My continued controversies with the Brahmins on the subject of their idolatry and superstition, and my interference with their custom of burning widows, and other pernicious practices, revived and increased their animosity against me ; and through their influence with my family, my father was again obliged to withdraw his countenance openly, though his limited pecuniary support was still continued to me.

After my father's death I opposed the advocates of idolatry with still greater boldness. Availing myself of the art of printing, now established in India, I published various works and pamphlets against their errors, in the native and foreign languages. This raised such a feeling against me, that I was at last

deserted by every person except two or three Scotch friends, to whom, and the nation to which they belong, I always feel grateful.

The ground which I took in all my controversies was, not that of opposition to *Brahminism*, but to a *perversion* of it; and I endeavoured to show that the idolatry of the Brahmins was contrary to the practice of their ancestors, and the principles of the ancient books and authorities which they profess to revere and obey. Notwithstanding the violence of the opposition and resistance to my opinions, several highly respectable persons, both among my own relations and others, began to adopt the same sentiments.

I now felt a strong wish to visit Europe, and obtain, by personal observation, a more thorough insight into its manners, customs, religion, and political institutions. I refrained, however, from carrying this intention into effect until the friends who coincided in my sentiments should be increased in number and strength. My expectations having been at length realised, in November, 1830, I embarked for England, as the discussion of the East India Company's charter was expected to come on, by which the treatment of the natives of India, and its future government, would be determined for many years to come, and an appeal to the King in Council, against the abolition of the practice of burning widows, was to be heard before the Privy Council; and his Majesty the Emperor of Delhi had likewise commissioned me to bring before the authorities in England certain encroachments on his rights by the East India Company. I accordingly arrived in England in April, 1831.

I hope you will excuse the brevity of this sketch,\* as I have no leisure at present to enter into particulars, and

I remain, &c., .

RAMMOHUN ROY.



## ADDRESS TO LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK.\*

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD WILLIAM CAVENDISH BENTINCK,

MY LORD :

With hearts filled with the deepest gratitude, and impressed with the utmost reverence, we, the undersigned native inhabitants of Calcutta and its vicinity, beg to be permitted to approach your Lordship, to offer personally our humble but warmest acknowledgments for the invaluable protection which your Lordship's government has recently afforded to the lives of the Hindoo female part of your subjects, and for your humane and successful exertions in rescuing us for ever, from the gross stigma hitherto attached to our character as wilful murderers of females, and zealous promoters of the practice of suicide.

Excessive jealousy of their female connexions, operating on the breasts of Hindoo princes, rendered those despots regardless of the common bonds of society, and of their incumbent duty as protectors of the weaker sex, insomuch that, with a view to prevent every possibility of their widows forming subsequent attachments, they availed themselves of their arbitrary power, and under the cloak of religion, introduced the practice of burning

\* This remarkable address was presented on the 16th January 1830 to Lord William Bentinck upon the passing of the Act for the abolition of the *Suttee* by Ram Mohun Roy, Callynauth Roy, Huree Hur Dutt, and others, on behalf of 300 inhabitants of Calcutta. There were two addresses prepared, one being in Bengali read by Baboo Callynath Roy, the other, a translation of the former in English, read by Baboo Huree Hur Dutt. There is every reason to believe that the address was drawn up by Ram Mohun Roy from its language and from the sentiments conveyed in it.—ED.



widows alive, under the first impressions of sorrow or despair, immediately after the demise of their husbands. This system of female destruction, being admirably suited to the selfish and servile disposition of the populace, has been eagerly followed by them, in defiance of the most sacred authorities, such as the *Oopunishuds*, or the principal parts of the *Veds*, and the *Bhugvud Geeta*, as well as of the direct commandment of Munoo, the first and the greatest of all the legislators, conveyed in the following words: 'Let a widow continue till death forgiving all injuries, performing austere duties, avoiding every sensual pleasure,' &c. (Ch. 5, v. 158.)

While in fact fulfilling the suggestions of their jealousy, they pretended to justify this hideous practice by quoting some passages from authorities of evidently inferior weight, sanctioning the wilful ascent of a widow on the flaming pile of her husband, as if they were offering such female sacrifices in obedience to the dictates of the Shastrus and not from the influence of jealousy. It is, however, very fortunate that the British government, under whose protection the lives of both the males and females of India have been happily placed by Providence, has, after diligent inquiry, ascertained that even those inferior authorities, permitting wilful ascent by a widow to the flaming pile, have been practically set aside, and that, in gross violation of their language and spirit, the relatives of widows have, in the burning of those infatuated females, almost invariably used to fasten them down on the pile, and heap over them large quantities of wood and other materials adequate to the prevention of their escape—an outrage on humanity which has been frequently perpetrated under the indirect sanction of native officers, undeservedly employed for the security of life and preservation of peace and tranquillity.

In many instances, in which the vigilance of the magistrate has deterred the native officers of police from indulging their own inclination, widows have either made their escape from the pile after being partially burnt, or retracted their resolution to

burn when brought to the awful task, to the mortifying disappointment of the instigators : while in some instances the resolution to die has been retracted, on pointing out to the widows the impropriety of their intended undertaking, and on promising them safety and maintenance during life, notwithstanding the severe reproaches liable thereby to be heaped on them by their relatives and friends.

In consideration of circumstances so disgraceful in themselves, and so incompatible with the principles of British rule, your Lordship in Council, fully impressed with the duties required of you by justice and humanity, has deemed it incumbent on you, for the honour of the British name, to come to the resolution, that the lives of your female Hindoo subjects should be henceforth more efficiently protected ; that the heinous sin of cruelty to females may no longer be committed, and that the most ancient and purest system of Hindoo religion should not any longer be set at nought by the Hindoos themselves. The magistrates, in consequence, are, we understand, positively ordered to execute the resolution of government by all possible means.

We are, my Lord, reluctantly restrained by the consideration of the nature of your exalted situation, from indicating our inward feelings by presenting any valuable offering as commonly adopted on such occasions ; but we should consider ourselves highly guilty of insincerity and ingratitude, if we remained negligently silent when urgently called upon by our feelings and conscience to express publicly the gratitude we feel for the everlasting obligation you have graciously conferred on the Hindoo community at large. We, however, are at a loss to find language sufficiently indicative even of a small portion of the sentiments we are desirous of expressing on the occasion ; we must therefore conclude this address with entreating that your Lordship will condescendingly accept our most grateful acknowledgments for this act of benevolence towards us, and will pardon the silence of those who, though equally partaking of the

blessing bestowed by your Lordship, have through ignorance or prejudice omitted to join us in this common cause.

The following was the reply of Lord William Bentinck to the above address :—

“ It is very satisfactory for me to find that, according to the opinions of so many respectable and intelligent Hindoos, the practice which has recently been prohibited, not only was not required by the rules of their religion, but was at variance with those writings which they deem to be of the greatest force and authority. Nothing but a reluctance to inflict punishment for acts which might be conscientiously believed to be enjoined by religious precepts, could have induced the British government at any time to permit, within territories under its protection, an usage so violently opposed to the best feelings of human nature. Those who present this address are right in supposing that by every nation in the world, except the Hindoos themselves, this part of their customs has always been made a reproach against them, and nothing so strangely contrasted with the better features of their own national character, so inconsistent with the affections which unite families, so destructive of the moral principles on which society is founded, has ever subsisted amongst a people in other respects so civilized. I trust that the reproach is removed for ever ; and I feel a sincere pleasure in thinking that the Hindoos will thereby be exalted in the estimation of mankind, to an extent in some degree proportioned to the repugnance which was felt for the usage which has now ceased.”

—ED.

## ANTI-SUTTEE PETITION.\*

TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS OF THE UNITED  
KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND IN  
PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Natives of India.

Sheweth,

That a practice has prevailed throughout India particularly in Bengal, of burning those widows on the funeral piles of their deceased husbands, who could be induced to offer themselves as voluntary sacrifices.

That this barbarous and inhuman practice has been happily abolished by the Government of the Right Honourable Lord William Cavendish Bentinck, who has thus conferred an inestimable benefit on the native population of India.

That the regulation prohibiting the practice has been received with gratitude by many, while the majority of the native population have remained passive and acquiescent, although nearly a twelve-month has elapsed since the abolition took place.

That as a proof of your Honourable House of the feeling entertained on the subject by a numerous portion of the native community, the subjoined address was presented to the Governor General in Council expressive of their thanks for his benevolent interference.

\* This is the counter-petition to the memorial of the advocates of *Suttee*, which Ram Mohun Roy brought with him to England from India and presented to the House of Commons. We cannot but believe, that this also like the foregoing was prepared by the Raja himself.—ED.

[Here was recited the address presented by the Inhabitants of Calcutta to Lord William Bentinck, in January 1830, for which see the preceding address, p. 483.]

That your petitioners have, however, learned that a number of natives, professing to be attached to the ancient practice, have prepared a petition to your Honourable House, soliciting the re-establishment of the rite of burning their widows ; and therefore to prevent your Honourable House from supposing that their sentiments are those of the whole native population, your petitioners respectfully present themselves to the notice of your Honourable House, and pray that the Regulation of the local government may be confirmed and enforced.

That your petitioners cannot permit themselves to suppose that such a practice, abhorrent to all the feelings of nature, the obligations of society, and the principles of good government, will receive the sanction of your Honourable House, much less that, having been abolished, the British name and character will be dishonoured by its re-establishment.

That your petitioners confidently rely on receiving from your Honourable House a full and final confirmation of the Act of the Governor General in Council abolishing the rite of widow burning.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

## THE TRUST DEED OF THE BRAHMO SOMAJ.\*

**THIS INDENTURE** made the eighth day of January in the Year of Christ one thousand eight hundred and thirty **between** DWARKANAUTH TAGORE of Jorasankoe in the Town of Calcutta Zumeendar, KALEENAUTH ROY of Burranugur in the Zillah of Havelly in the Suburbs of Calcutta aforesaid Zumeendar, PRUSSUNNOCOMAR TAGORE of Pattoriaghatta in Calcutta aforesaid Zumeendar, RAMCHUNDER BIDYABAGISH of Simlah in Calcutta aforesaid Pundit and RAMMOHUN ROY of Manicktullah in Calcutta aforesaid Zumeendar of the one part and BOYKONTONAUTH ROY of Burranugur in the Zillah of Havelly in the Suburbs of the Town of Calcutta aforesaid Zumeendar, RADAPERSAUD ROY of Manicktullah in Calcutta aforesaid Zumeendar and RAMANAUTH TAGORE of Jorasankoe in Calcutta aforesaid Banian ( Trustees named and appointed for the purposes hereinafter mentioned ) of the other part **witnesseth** that for and in consideration of the sum of Sicca Rupees Ten of Lawful money of Bengal by the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore to the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocomar Tagore Ram Chunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy in hand paid at and before the sealing and delivery of these Presents (the receipt whereof they the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy do and each and every of them doth hereby acknowledge ) and for settling and assuring the messuage land tenements heriditaments and premises hereinafter mentioned to be hereby granted and released to for and upon such uses trusts intents and purposes as are hereafter expressed and declared of and concerning the same and for divers other good

\* This is a faithful reprint of the original. It was also published in the Tattwabodhini Patrika, No. 90, for Magh, 1772 Sak.

Causes and Considerations them hereunto especially moving they the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunno-coomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy Have and each and every of them Hath granted bargained sold aliened released and confirmed and by these presents Do and each and every of them Doth grant bargain sell alien release and confirm unto the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore their heirs and assigns **all** that brick built messuage ( hereafter to be used as a place for religious worship as is hereinafter more fully expressed and declared ) Building or Tenement with the piece or parcel of Land or Ground thereunto belonging and on part whereof the same is erected and built containing by estimation four Cottahs and two Chittacks be the same a little more or less situate lying and being in the Chitpore Road in Sootanooty in the Town of Calcutta aforesaid and butted and bounded as follows ( that is to say ) on the north by the House and Ground now or formerly belonging to one Foolooray Rutton on the south by the House and Ground formerly belonging to one Ramkristno Kur since deceased on the east by the House and Ground now or formerly belonging to one Radamoney Bhamonney and on the west by the said public Road or Street commonly called Chitpore Road or howsoever otherwise the said messuage building land tenements and hereditament or any of them now are or is or heretofore were or was situated tenanted called known described or distinguished and all other the messuages lands tenements and hereditaments ( if any ) which are or are expressed or intended to be described or comprised in a certain Indenture of bargain and sale hereinafter referred to **together** with all and singular the out houses offices edifices buildings erections Compounds Yards walls ditches hedges fences enclosures ways paths passages woods 'under-woods shrubs timber and other trees entrances casements lights privileges profits benefits emoluments advantages rights titles members appendages and appurtenances whatsqever to the said messuage building land tene-

ments hereditaments and premises or any part or parcel thereof belonging or in any wise appertaining or with the same or any part or parcel thereof now or at any time or times heretofore held used occupied possessed or enjoyed or accepted reputed deemed taken or known as part parcel or member thereof or any part thereof (all which said messuage building land tenements hereditaments and premises are now in the actual possession of or legally vested in the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore by virtue of a bargain and sale to them thereof made by the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy for Sicca Rupees Five Consideration by an Indenture bearing date the day next before the day of the date and executed previous to the sealing and delivery of these Presents for the Term of one whole Year Commencing from the day next preceding the day of the date of the same Indenture and by force of the statute made for transferring uses into possession ) and the remainder and remainders reversion and reversions Yearly and other rents issues and profits thereof **and all** the Estate Right Title interest trust use possession inheritance property profit benefit claim and demand whatsoever both at Law and in Equity of them the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy respectively of into upon or out of the same or any part thereof Together with all Deeds Pottahs evidences muniments and writings whatsoever which relate to the said premises or any part thereof and which now are or hereafter shall or may be in the hands possession or custody of the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy their heirs executors administrators or representatives or of any person or persons from whom he or they can or may procure the same without action or suit at Law or in Equity **To have and to hold** the said Messuage Building land tenements hereditaments and all and singular



other the premises hereinbefore and in the said Indenture of bargain and sale described and mentioned and hereby granted and released or intended so to be and every part and parcel thereof with their and every of their rights members and appurtenances unto the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore their heirs and assigns But to the uses nevertheless upon the trusts and to and for the ends intents and purposes hereinafter declared and expressed of and concerning the same and to and for no other ends intents and purposes whatsoever ( that is to say) **To the use** of the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore or the survivors or survivor of them or the heirs of such survivor or their or his assigns **upon Trust** and in confidence that they the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore or the survivors or survivor of them or the heirs of such survivor or their or his assigns shall and do from time to time and at all times forever hereafter permit and suffer the said messuage or building land tenements hereditaments and premises with their appurtenances to be used occupied enjoyed applied and appropriated as and for a place of public meeting of all sorts and descriptions of people without distinction as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly sober religious and devout manner for the worship and adoration of the Eternal Unsearchable and Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe but not under or by any other name designation or title peculiarly used for and applied to any particular Being or Beings by any man or set of men whatsoever and that no graven image statue or sculpture carving painting picture portrait or the likeness of any thing shall be admitted within the said messuage building land tenements hereditaments and premises and that no sacrifice offering or oblation of any kind or thing shall ever be permitted therein and that no animal or living creature shall within or on the said messuage building land tenements hereditaments and premises be deprived of life either for religious purposes or for food and that no

eating or drinking (except such as shall be necessary by any accident for the preservation of life) feasting or rioting be permitted therein or thereon and that in conducting the said worship and adoration no object animate or inanimate that has been or is or shall hereafter become or be recognized as an object of worship by any man or set of men shall be reviled or slightly or contemptuously spoken of or alluded to either in preaching praying or in the hymns or other mode of worship that may be delivered or used in the said Messuage or Building and that no sermon preaching discourse prayer or hymn be delivered made or used in such worship but such as have a tendency to the promotion of the contemplation of the Author and Preserver of the Universe to the promotion of charity morality piety benevolence virtue and the strengthening the bonds of union Between men of all religious persuasions and creeds and also that a person of Good repute and well known for his knowledge piety and morality be employed by the said trustees or the survivors or survivor of them or the heirs of such survivor or their or his assigns as a resident Superintendent and for the purpose of superintending the worship so to be performed as is hereinbefore stated and expressed and that such worship be performed daily or at least as often as once in seven days **Provided always** and it is hereby declared and agreed by and between the parties to these presents that in case the several Trustees in and by these presents named and appointed or any of them or any other succeeding Trustees or Trustee of the said trust estate and premises for the time being to be nominated or appointed as hereinafter is mentioned shall depart this life or be desirous to be discharged of or from the aforesaid Trusts or shall refuse or neglect or become incapable by or in any manner to act in the said trusts then and in such case and from time to time as often and as soon as any such event shall happen it shall be lawful for the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy during their joint lives or the sur-

vivors or survivor of them after the death of any or either of them jointly and in concurrence with the Trustees or Trustee for the time being and in case of and after the death of the survivor of them the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bdyabagish and Rammohun Roy then for the said Trustees or Trustee by any deed or writing under their or his hands and seals or hand and seal to be attested by two or more credible Witnesses to nominate substitute and appoint some other fit person or persons to supply the place of the Trustees or Trustee respectively so dying desiring to be discharged or refusing or neglecting or becoming incapable by or in any manner to act as aforesaid and that immediately after any such appointment shall be made all and every the messuage or building land tenements hereditaments and premises which under and by virtue of these presents shall be then vested in the Trustees or Trustee so dying desiring to be discharged or refusing or neglecting or becoming incapable by or in any manner to act as aforesaid shall be conveyed transferred assigned and assured so and in such manner that the same shall and may be legally fully and absolutely vested in the Trustees or Trustee so to be appointed in their or his room or stead either solely and alone or jointly with the surviving continuing or acting Trustees or Trustee as the case may require and in his or their heirs or assigns to the uses upon the Trusts and to and for the several ends intents and purposes hereinbefore declared or expressed concerning the same and that every such new Trustees or Trustee shall and may act and assist in the management carrying on and execution of the Trusts to which they or he shall be so appointed ( although they or he shall not have been invested with the seisin of the Trustees or Trustee to whose places or place they or he shall have succeeded ) either jointly with the surviving continuing or other acting Trustees or Trustee or solely as the case may require in such and the like manner and in all respects as if such new Trustees or Trustee had been originally appointed by these presents **Provided lastly** and it is hereby

further declared and agreed by and between the said Parties to these presents that no one or more of the said Trustees shall be answerable or accountable for the other or others of them nor for the acts defaults or omissions of the other or others of them any consent permission or privity by any or either of them to any act deed or thing to or by the other or others of them done with an intent and for the purpose only of facilitating the Execution of the trusts of these presents notwithstanding nor shall any new appointed Trustees or Trustee or their or his heirs or assigns be answerable or accountable for the acts deeds neglects defaults or omissions of any Trustees or Trustee in or to whose place or places they or he shall or may succeed but such of them the said Trustees shall be answerable accountable and responsible for his own respective acts deeds neglects defaults or omissions only and the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy do hereby for themselves severally and respectively and for their several and respective heirs executors administrators and representatives covenant grant declare and agree with and to the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore their heirs and assigns in manner Following (that is to say) that for and notwithstanding any act deed matter or thing whatsoever heretofore by the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy or any or either of them had made done committed or wittingly or willingly omitted or suffered to the contrary they the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy at the time of the sealing and delivery of these presents are or one of them is lawfully rightfully and absolutely seized in their or his demesne as of Fee in their or his own right and to their or his own use of the said messuage building land tenements hereditaments and premises mentioned and intended to be hereby granted and released with the appurtenances both at Law and in Equity as of in and for a good sure

perfect and indefeasible estate of inheritance, in fee simple in possession and in severalty without any Condition Contingent Trust Proviso power of limitation or revocation of any use or uses or any other restraint matter or thing whatsoever which can or may Alter Change Charge determine lessen incumber defeat prejudicially affect or make void the same or defeat determine abridge or vary the uses or trusts hereby declared and expressed and also that they the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy (for and notwithstanding any such act deed matter or thing as aforesaid) or some of them now have in themselves or one of them hath in himself full power and Lawful and Absolute Authority by these presents to grant bargain sell release and assure the said messuage land tenements hereditaments and premises mentioned and intended to be hereby granted and Released with the appurtenances and the possession reversion and inheritance thereof unto and to the use of the said Boykantonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore and their heirs to the uses upon the Trusts and to and for the ends intents and purposes hereinbefore expressed or declared of and concerning the same according to the True intent and meaning of these presents **and further** that the said messuage or building land tenements hereditaments and premises with their rights members and appurtenances shall from time to time and at all times hereafter remain continue and be to the use upon the Trusts and for the ends intents and purposes hereinbefore declared or expressed concerning the same and shall and lawfully may be peaceably and quietly holden and enjoyed and applied and appropriated accordingly without the let suit hindrance claim demand interruption or denial of the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy or any or either of them or any or either of their heirs representatives or of any other person or persons now or hereafter claiming or to claim or possessing any estate right title trust or interest of in to or

out of the same or any part or parcel thereof by from under or in trust for them or any or either of them and that free and clear and clearly and absolutely acquitted exonerated and discharged or otherwise by the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy or any or either of them their or any or either of their Heirs executors administrators and representatives well and sufficiently saved harmless and kept indemnified of from and against all and all manner of former and other gifts grants bargains Sales Leases Mortgages uses wills devises rents arrears of rents estates titles charges and other incumbrances whatsoever had made done committed created suffered or executed by the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy or any or either of them or any or either of their heirs or representatives or any person or persons now or hereafter rightfully claiming or possessing any estate right title or interest at Law or in Equity from through under or in trust for them or any or either of them or with their or any or either of their consent privity or procurement or acts means or defaults **and more over** that they the said Dwarkanauth Tagore Kaleenauth Roy Prussunnocoomar Tagore Ramchunder Bidyabagish and Rammohun Roy or their heirs and representatives and all and every other person or persons whomsoever now or hereafter lawfully equitably and rightfully claiming or possessing any estate right title use trust or interest either at Law or in Equity of into upon or out of the said messuage land tenements hereditaments and premises mentioned or intended to be hereby granted and released with the appurtenances or any part thereof by from under or in trust for them or any or either of them shall and will from time to time and at all times hereafter at the reasonable request of the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore or the survivors or survivor of them or the heirs of the survivor of their or his assigns make do acknowledge suffer execute and perfect all and every such further and other

lawful and reasonable acts things deeds conveyances and assurances in the Law whatsoever for the further better more perfectly absolutely and satisfactorily granting conveying releasing confirming and assuring the said messuage or building land tenements hereditaments and premises mentioned to be hereby granted and released and every part and parcel thereof and the possession reversion and inheritance of the same with their and every of their appurtenances unto the said Boykontonauth Roy Radapersaud Roy and Ramanauth Tagore or other the Trustees or Trustee for the time being and their heirs for the uses upon the Trusts and to and for the ends intents and purposes hereinbefore declared and expressed as by the said Trustees and Trustee or his or their counsel learned in the Law shall be reasonably devised or advised and required so as such further assurance or assurances contain or imply in them no further or other Warranty or Covenants on the part of the person or persons who shall be required to make or execute the same than for or against the acts deeds omissions or defaults of him her or them or his her or their heirs executors administrators and so that he she or they be not compelled or compellable to go or travel from the usual place of his her or their respective abode for making or executing the same **In witness** whereof the said parties to these presents have hereunto subscribed and set their hands and seals the day and Year first within written.

Dwarkanauth Tagore.

Callynauth Roy

Prossonnocoomar Tagore.

Rammohun Roy.

Boycontonauth Roy.

Radapersaud Roy.

Ramanauth Tagore.

Sealed and Delivered at Calcutta  
aforesaid in the presence of

J. Fountain.

Atty. at Law.

Ramgopaul Day.

## Vol. II.

Will contain—

1. The Precepts of Jesus, the guide to peace and happiness.
2. An Appeal to the Christian Public in defence of the Precepts of Jesus.
3. Second Appeal to Do. Do.
4. Final Appeal to Do. Do.
5. Exposition of the Practical Operation of the Judicial and Revenue systems of India, and of the general character and condition of its native inhabitants, as submitted in evidence to the *Authorities in England*, with Notes and Illustrations: also A Brief preliminary sketch of the ancient and modern boundaries, and of the history of that country :—being chiefly the answers to 145 questions put to Ram Mohun Roy by the Select Committee of the House of Commons.
6. Remarks on the Settlement in India by Europeans, showing the Advantages and the Disadvantages of Europeans residing in India permanently.
7. Miscellaneous works : Letters, short speeches &c.

IVANRAM









